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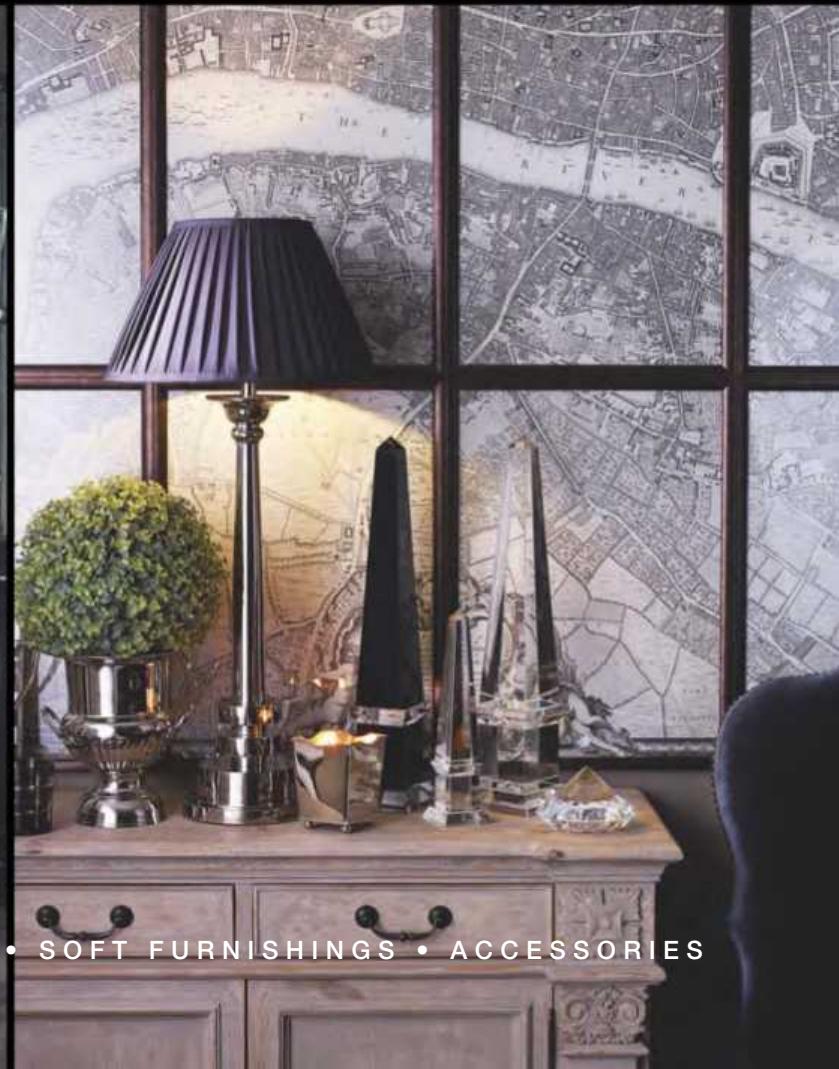
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On the cover The dining room of an Oxfordshire farmhouse (pages 102-107), photographed by Michael Sinclair. **Cover stories are highlighted in colour**



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CONTRIBUTORS



CHRISTOPHER GIBBS
Dealer and collector

Where do you live? 'I have two rooms in London, circa 1800, designed by the architect Henry Holland. Otherwise I live in Morocco – in Tangier, where there is an accumulation of a lifetime's collecting, which I ceaselessly rearrange and occasionally add to.'

A fascination and appreciation for beautiful objects has guided the working life of Christopher Gibbs. He is one of the best-known names

in the antiques world, making a mark as both a dealer and collector. He also spent 10 years as a contributing editor at *Vogue* and was a key figure in men's fashion in the Sixties. 'I've never wanted to work in interiors, but always wanted to own and enjoy beautiful things and to pass them on to people who are equally delighted by them,' he says. As a new book on the work of Robert Kime is published, Christopher reflects on his friend's most memorable projects (from page 122).



PETER JANKE
Garden designer

Which plants are your current favourites? 'I'm reorganising my collections of species: hellebores, polygonatums and ferns. But the one that blows me away is *Lilium majoense*. *Hemerocallis 'Mascara Snake'* was super this year, too!' Since designing his first flower bed aged six, German garden designer Peter Janke has never looked back. Serious work started when he took over the family nursery in the Nineties, and it was during this time that his father instilled in him a love for species rather than 'flamboyant cultivars'. Today, his 10-year-old design studio has been responsible for countless gardens across Germany, and his own garden near Düsseldorf, featured from page 128, is planted with over 4,000 species. It is lush with ornamental grasses and cypress trees that merge perfectly with the woodland beyond.



CLARISSA CLIFFORD
Interior designer

Describe how you started in interiors. 'I studied history of art and, during my first job at Christian Dior in London, I realised I loved design, colour and texture, but that fashion wasn't for me. I then worked with Christopher Rowley for 25 years.'

As the interior designer of Ugbrooke Park, inherited by her husband, Clarissa Clifford found herself in a delicate situation. Unlike the houses that she had worked on for clients, where walls were taken down, rooms restructured and new furniture brought in, here the heavy lifting was with endless restorations. And as she found herself sorting through the attics, dusting off Ugbrooke's 900-year history by way of forgotten chairs, paintings and heirlooms, she felt privileged rather than daunted by this formidable task. See the results from page 88 □

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FROM THE EDITOR



One of my highlights of last Christmas was putting out a plate of food by the fire with my niece for Father Christmas and then, once she had gone to bed, making it look as if he really had paid a visit. Spurred on by my brother-in-law, we went to great lengths – taking bites out of mince pies, spreading the crumbs in an artistic trail, swigging his whisky and, to my mother-in-law's slight horror, making big sooty footprints over her rug. Happily, our subterfuge was met by shrieks of excitement in the morning. What it would be to still believe in the wonder of Father Christmas. Although I have to admit that I do still get a stocking – my husband is a brilliant present giver.

Here at *House & Garden*, we sadly cannot provide the excitement of a possible sighting of Father Christmas, but this issue and its accompanying new supplement, *Christmas Unwrapped*,

is packed with ideas for decorations, presents and wintry escapades. I am going to do my best to make at least one of Caroline Barty's edible present ideas (from page 140) – the pistachio and artichoke pâté sounds particularly good. I also rather like Ruth Sleightholme's idea of sprinkling the table with 'sprig stars' (from page 61), while Gabby Deeming's twinkly, Christmas-filled rooms, between pages 116 and 121, give lots of inspiration. Note that her tree is layered with branches of eucalyptus and other foliage, making it look softer and fuller and providing a pretty variation in tone.

On pages 15 to 18, Viola Lanari has come up with some clever ideas for personalised presents, providing thoughtful solutions for the most tricky of recipients. But if abundant decorations and plentiful presents are not your thing, consider escaping to Swedish Lapland (page 150) – it sounds magical. If I didn't have two tiny children, I'd certainly consider it.

Perhaps most enticing of all in this December issue are the rooms created by decorator Robert Kime, which feature from page 122 – particularly his sitting room at Upper Farm with its crackling fire. Robert is truly a master of creating rooms that feel naturally beautiful, layered and at ease with themselves. To mark the publication of a book on his decorating work, from which these pictures are taken, Robert's friend and fellow dealer and aesthete, Christopher Gibbs, considers what it is that makes these interiors 'dance and smile'. For anybody interested in English decoration, this book needs a place on your Christmas wish list □

Hattie Byng



Are you an interior designer or architect? Join our online directory, The List, now at houseandgarden.co.uk/thelist

Wallpaper background: 'Bergamot Leaf' (pomegranate and thyme), from Soane

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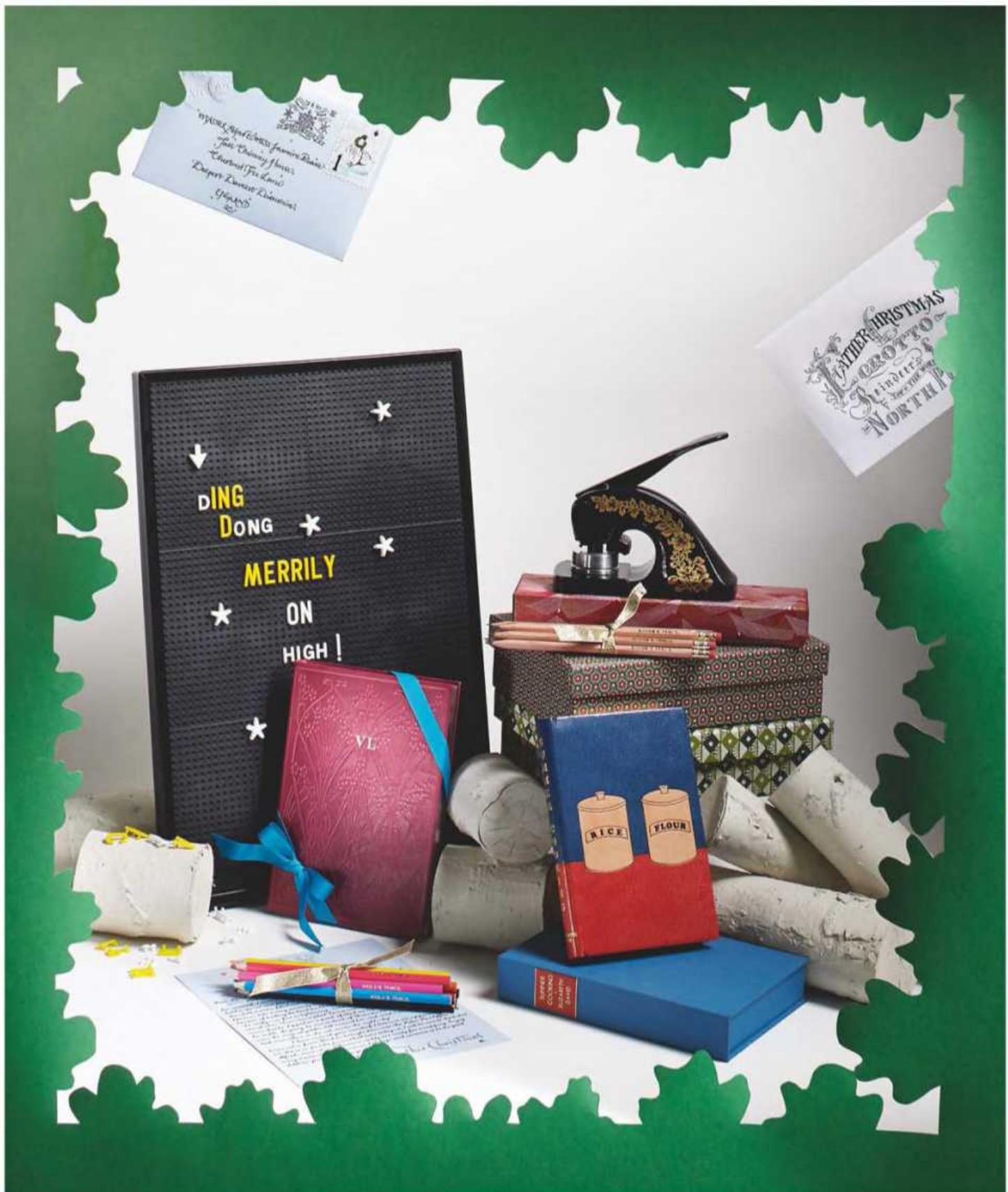
Make it personal

VIOLA LANARI chooses bespoke, customisable and monogrammed pieces to give as extra-special presents

PHOTOGRAPHS ANDERS GRAMER



Straw wreath, by Elaine Lindsay, from £105, from The New Craftsmen. Bespoke glazed porcelain whippet-stamp **side plate**, 21cm diameter, and porcelain 'J' letter-stamp **dinner plate** with unglazed border, 27cm diameter; both from £393 for a set of 6 side plates, 6 dinner plates and 6 bowls, from John Julian. Alphabet necklaces: silver 'S' and 'M', £30 each, and gold-plated 'L', £34; with chains, £28 for sterling silver, and £35 for 9-carat gold; all from Darkroom. Porcelain '**Monogrammed Mugs**', £6 each, from Anthropologie ▷



Personalised calligraphic letters to and from Father Christmas, £34.90 as shown, from Polar Post. PVC 'Retro Peg Board', 46 x 31cm, £95 including detachable characters, from The Letteroom. Aluminium and iron stationery embosser, £59.99, from City Co Seals. Bespoke 'Pencil Box', £10; 'A5 Decorative Boxes', available in a range of patterns, £19.50 each; all from Shepherds. Personalised colouring pencils, £6.50 for 12, from Able Labels. Monogrammed leather notebook (pink), 21 x 15cm, £60, plus £5 per letter, from Liberty. Bespoke book-binding service, from £650 a book; pictured is *Summer Cooking* by Elizabeth David, 1955 first edition, £1,200 with a bespoke cover, from Shepherds ▷



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Customised embroidered cotton wall hanging, 'Owl and Pussycat', 30 x 25cm, £125, from Fine Cell Work. Iron-on alphabet letter patches, £2.95 each, from The Letteroom. Personalised laundry bag (dove grey), linen, 65 x 45cm, £24.95, plus £8 a word, from The Linen Works. Palm-leaf mini baskets with name embroidered in wool, 19 x 21cm diameter, £22 each, from Edit58. Monogrammed leather '13in Classic Satchel' (navy), 23 x 33 x 7cm, from £108, plus £7 per letter, from The Cambridge Satchel Company. 'Panama Large Washbag' (nile blue), £215, plus £6.95 per letter, from Smythson. Alpaca throw with hand-embroidered letter, 'Nixon', 165 x 152cm, £395, from Jonathan Adler. For suppliers' details, see Stockists page □

Where there's mistletoe, there's mischief.
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Notebook

GABBY DEEMING shows us what's caught her eye this month

1 Foiled-card pinwheel ornaments, from 38cm diameter, £14.50 for a set of 4, from SCP. **2** Digitally printed wallcovering, 'Wabi' (cloud), £227 a square metre, from Calico Wallpaper. **3** Brass, painted steel and porcelain table light, 'Lab Light', by Andrea Kleinloog for Karakter, 70 x 14cm shade diameter, £450, from Viaduct. **4** Jesmonite coffee table, 'Nim', 41 x 100cm diameter, £4,350, from Pinch. **5** Walnut 'Lounging Chair', covered in 'Patterned Rag Rug' (indigo), cotton, 82 x 79 x 106cm, £2,125, from Ralph Lauren Home. **6** Bone china mugs, 'Mark' (from left: wheat, fern, poppy, nettle, thistle, twig, lavender), by Welovekaoru, £20 each, from Luna & Curious ▷

1



2



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4



1 Ceramic decorations, from £4.20 each, from Broste Copenhagen. **2** Cotton double duvet covers, 'Odette' (from top: iodine, dijon, biscuit, marsala), £159 each, from La Cerise sur le Gâteau. **3** Cotton lampshades, 'Florentine', (red, blue), 30.4cm shade diameter, £95 each, from Susan Deliss. **4** Fabric, from top: 'Knurl' (brick), 'Little F' (tutti) and 'Mr Men' (clover), linen, £102 a metre, from Howe at 36 Bourne Street. **5** Glass and lacquered steel table, 'TS' (rusty red), 35 x 80cm diameter, by GamFratesi for Gubi, £759, from Gubi. **6** Paint, from top: 'Moonlit Night', 'Red Velvet', 'Greengage' and 'London Roof', £39 for 2.5 litres matt emulsion, from Designers Guild ▷

5



6



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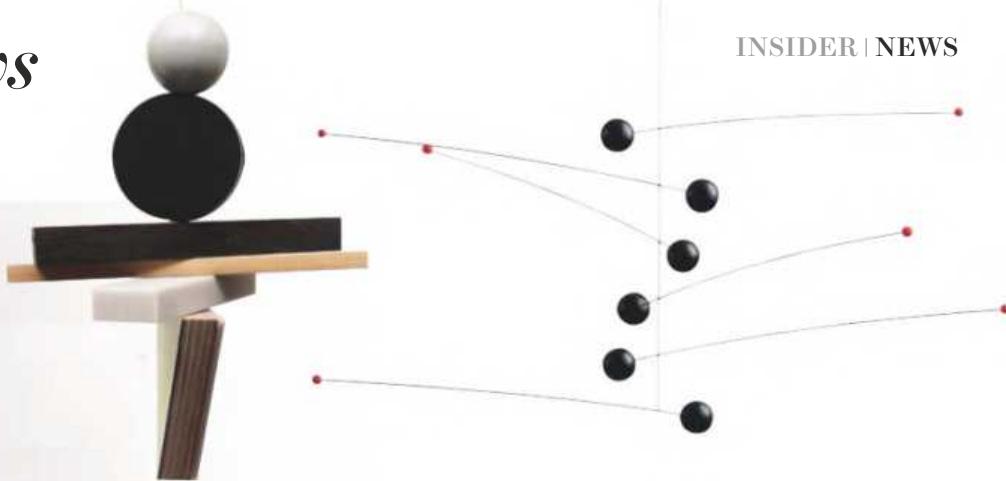
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Something in the air

The influence of Alexander Calder's mobiles is seen in modern pieces

Mobiles have delighted the eye of many a beholder since antiquity and the earliest examples were wind chimes in Rome and Asia, where they were used to ward off evil spirits. Today they are more associated with children's nurseries. Somewhere in between, however, the American sculptor Alexander Calder began to explore the medium, and although he wasn't the first to work in kinetic art, he certainly became its most famed exponent.

A reminder of why is provided by Tate Modern this month, as it stages an exhibition of the modernist's work exploring suspension and balance. But the Tate isn't alone in reassessing Calder's work – some designers have applied his ideas to interior accessories. One of the highlights of the Milan Furniture Fair earlier this year was the elegant hanging 'Screen System' by

the Italian-Danish duo GamFratesi for Cappellini. It is comprised of large quilted petals positioned on a metal frame and suspended from the ceiling by a cord – a creative example of a room divider or clutter screen.

Smaller examples may fit into the average home more easily as eye-catching objets d'art, and there is no shortage of these from established names and new design talent. Danish company Flensted Mobiles, which celebrated its sixtieth anniversary last year, continues to make dozens of styles, while the Japanese metalsmith Shiori Miyajima is becoming well known under the name Kanehen for her elegant mobiles in cut and beaten brass. Closer to home, the jewellery designer Corrie Williamson makes striking designs from her workshop offcuts, including Perspex and beech. *'Alexander Calder: Performing Sculpture'* is at Tate Modern, November 11–April 3, 2016; admission, £18. tate.org.uk DN ▷

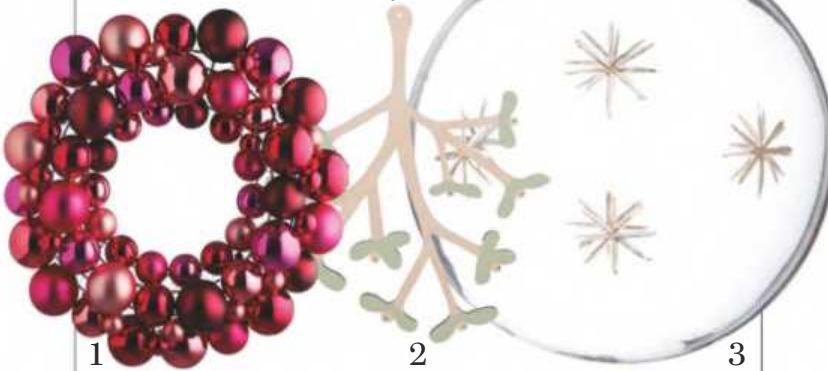


CLOCKWISE FROM ABOVE 'Screen System', by GamFratesi for Cappellini, from £1,740, from Poltrona Frau. 'Pendulum Mobile 16', by Corrie Williamson, £95, from Darkroom. 'Futura' (1970), by Flensted Mobiles, £40, from Skandium. 'Autumn Light', by Kanehen, £285, from The Shop Floor Project



Home economics

Christmas decorations that don't cost the earth, chosen by Bonnie Robinson



1 Bauble wreath, 'Angarsk', £30, from Habitat. 0344-4991111; habitat.co.uk. 2 Wooden mistletoe ornament, by Anna Wiscombe, £20, from Southbank Centre Shop. shop.southbankcentre.co.uk. 3 Glass bauble, £4, from The Contemporary Home. 0845-130 8229; tch.net

WEBWATCH: CHRISTMAS STATIONERY

Archivist Press (archivistgallery.com), a self-described 'homespun team of artisan printers' creates fun and colourful printed stationery using an ancient Heidelberg press. Made from paper milled in the Lake District, its snazzy seasonal selection includes Christmas cards in bright hues (pictured top). For a sophisticated greeting, **Mount Street Printers** in Mayfair (mountstreetprinters.com) also offers its luxurious stationery range online, including hand-engraved and die-stamped thank-you cards in colourful tissue-lined envelopes (pictured right), as well as smart tented (folded) place cards. Pep up presents and seasonal greetings with decorative designs from **Blade Rubber Stamps** (bladerubberstamps.co.uk). This shop in Bloomsbury - a stamper's paradise - offers its wooden-handled range on its website, including many motifs ideal for crafty correspondence (pictured bottom). **Rose Dahlsen**



ANATOMY OF A ROOM

Farm Girl, W1

Beata Heuman discusses her design for this new London café

I wanted the interiors of Farm Girl to be simple, like the food. The wall tiles are from Mosaic del Sur (cement-tiles.com); they are handmade, so the surface is uneven and, when they catch the light, the room sings. They are also durable, so would work well in a domestic kitchen. I opted for green because it's calming. The frieze is by London street artist Pang, inspired by Jean Cocteau's 'wall tattoos'. Drawn at that height, it emphasises the high ceilings. The pendant light by Jim Lawrence (jim-lawrence.co.uk) reminds me of a birdcage and shares the freedom of line of Pang's frieze. I painted the inside of the Artemis (artemishome.com) wall lights pink, which is a great trick for creating a flattering light. The banquette seating is bespoke - I spent a long time working out the dimensions. If you're sitting at a table, you don't want anything too deep. The arms were designed so you could rest a cup of coffee on them. I chose the Ikea (ikea.com) chairs for their outdoorsy feel - the caning looks a little like trellis. The storage is wire mesh from Maison du Monde (maisondumonde.com); I love the way it creates a living wall of fruit that showcases the ingredients and changes every day. **Emily Tobin**

FRENCH FANCIES Barely a year after Galerie Kreo opened an offshoot in London, two other Paris-based art and design dealers have followed suit with Mayfair showrooms. Galerie Dutko, known for its contemporary art and art deco furniture (including the Jules Wabbes table pictured far right) is on Davies Street, while Patrick Seguin, a dealer of twentieth-century furniture (such as the Jean Prouvé armchair pictured right) is on Brook Street. **DN ▷**



MY LIFE DESIGN STORIES

Wall System bookcase, design Rodolfo Dordoni.

Tribeca sofa and coffee table, Santa Monica Home armchair, design Jean-Marie Massaud.



To find your nearest showroom: **Poliform UK Ltd** 276-278 Kings Road London SW3 5AW, tel. 0207 368 7600

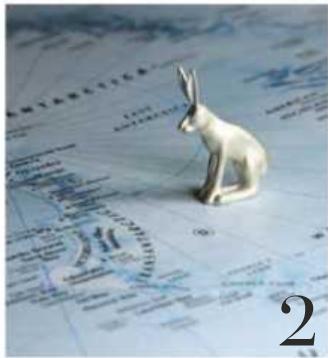
Design Centre Chelsea Harbour SW10 OXE, tel. 0207 352 0064 | **Poliform North** Victoria Avenue, Harrogate, showroom@poliformnorth.co.uk

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Poliform

1 WINTER CRAFT SHOWS

Visit the Craft Centre in Leeds to see works by local up-and-coming makers. Zoe Hillyard's vases, pictured right, will be on show this month, and would make excellent Christmas presents. Until January; admission, free. craftcentreleeds.co.uk

**2****SELECTED 2015**

Edinburgh's Dovecot Studios is running its selling exhibition, *Selected 2015*, for the third time this year, presenting the work of makers with Scottish connections, including silversmith Eileen Gatt, whose hare miniature is pictured left. November 21–December 23; admission, free. dovecotstudios.com

3 SHORT COURSES AT WEST DEAN

Set in the rolling South Downs, West Dean College offers creative short courses, including learning to make a wreath using foliage from the gardens. Spaces are limited, so book ahead. *Creating Christmas Wreaths and Garlands*, December 12; £140. westdean.org.uk

**7 FESTIVE THINGS TO DO**

Exhibitions, shopping fairs and crafty courses

5 CHRISTMAS PAST AT THE GEFFRYE Get a glimpse into how previous generations used to decorate their houses for Christmas at the Geffrye Museum's *Christmas Past: 400 Years of Seasonal Traditions in English Homes* exhibition. The period rooms will be transformed with authentic decorations, lighting and greenery. November 24–January 3; admission, free. geffrye-museum.org.uk

**4**

PETWORTH HOUSE AND PARK FAIR Get your Christmas shopping done in the beautiful setting of Petworth House in West Sussex. Its Christmas fair is the perfect place to pick up a stocking filler, with over 140 artisan stalls. For the first time this year, the fair will be held in the heart of the historic parkland. November 21–22; admission, £6. nationaltrust.org.uk/petworth-house

6 MADE BRIGHTON

This year, the craft and design fair Made Brighton celebrates its tenth anniversary – keep an eye out for new work by local artist John Dilnot whose screen prints and boxes, pictured below, celebrate the natural world. November 19–22; admission, £6.50. brighton-made.co.uk

**7 COCKPIT ARTS STUDIOS**

The social enterprise that provides independent makers with workspace and support is offering a glimpse into the studios of 170 artists as part of its Christmas Open Studios. You'll be able to meet the makers and buy their work directly from them. The event is held in two London venues: Cockpit Yard, Northington Street, WC1, November 27–29, and 18–22 Creekside, SE8, December 4–6. Admission, £5. cockpitarts.com □

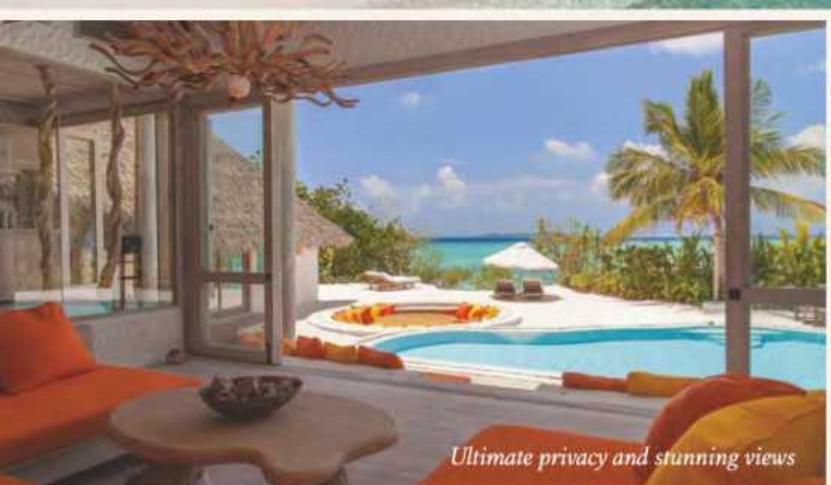
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FRESH PRINTS

Rare Treasures, a new book and prints set from the **Natural History Museum** archives, would be a lovely present for those interested in botanical art and natural history. The book includes chapters on some of the most iconic naturalists and botanical artists, from Pliny the Elder to Dutch artist Maria Sibylla Merian. Thirty-six images from the museum's collection of unique books and artworks are reproduced in a series of A4 frameable prints. The boxed set costs £30 from nhmshop.co.uk.

Outside Interests

CLARE FOSTER finds fresh gardening inspiration

WINTER WONDERS

Waddesdon Manor's gardens in Buckinghamshire are especially worth visiting in winter to see the spectacular light installations. For the final year of his residency, artist Bruce Munro will create pieces of light art in the garden, while Portuguese artist Joana Vasconcelos is creating two 10-metre-high candlesticks in front of the house, made from wine bottles, which will be illuminated from dusk each day. The popular Christmas fair runs from November 18 to December 6. waddesdon.org.uk



STUART BEBB



A **Funky Veg Kit** from Plant Theatre is the perfect stocking filler for anyone with an allotment or kitchen garden, with seeds and starter pots for weird and wonderful purple carrots, stripy tomatoes, multicoloured chard, yellow courgettes and red sprouts. Other kits include Psychedelic Salads and Gourmet Flowers; £14.99 each. planttheatre.com ▶



FROM LEFT *Catananche caerulea*. *Linaria purpurea* 'Canon Went'. *Dianthus carthusianorum*

GROWING PERENNIALS FROM SEED

The winter months are ideal for planning, and it is often my New Year's resolution to grow more from seed – especially since I have inherited a greenhouse, which I want to make the most of. I've always grown annuals from seed, but this year I want to try more perennials. With a pair of large borders to fill, I plan to grow a few key plants from seed, raising enough so that I can plant them in generous drifts – a cheaper option than buying nursery-grown plants for the entire border.

FIVE EASY PERENNIALS TO GROW FROM SEED

Good for a gravel garden, meadow or sunny border, *Dianthus carthusianorum* is one of the easiest perennial pinks to grow from seed, sending up tall flower spikes with tiny magenta blooms in July and August. It germinates readily and produces neat rosettes of spiky leaves. Sow seeds in February and plant out in May or June into an open sunny spot, in well-drained soil. If it is happy where it is, it will increase by self seeding the following year.

Though not as well known as some other perennials, *Catananche caerulea* is easy to grow from seed, with lavender-coloured flowers from July to September that look a little like cornflowers. The pretty, papery flowers are held on top of wiry stems that wave in the breeze, with silvery seed heads that are just as attractive. The seed germinates easily, sown in February or early March and planted out in late spring.

As well as the annual rudbeckias, the perennial *Rudbeckia fulgida* var. *sullivantii* 'Goldsturm' is easy to raise from seed, and it's well worth having a stock of these late-summer plants to slot into a border to help to extend the flowering season. Sow towards the end of January or as

early as possible to ensure that the plant flowers in the first season.

A useful addition to a cutting garden, *Linaria purpurea* 'Canon Went' is a pretty toadflax with 75cm spikes of shell-pink flowers. Easy and quick to grow, it will also self-seed prolifically, so it's good for filling a barren spot. Sow the seeds under cover in March or directly into the border in May or June.

My final choice is a biennial, not a perennial, but it will seed around, so it gives the feeling of being perennial. *Verbascum blattaria* 'Albiflorum' is a gorgeous verbascum with delicate sprays of white flowers blushed with pink. It is easy to raise from seed, but should ideally be sown very early in the season to flower the same year. If not, it can be sown in early summer for flowering the following year. Other perennials to try, as recommended by nurseryman Derry Watkins (see below), include *Campanula lactiflora*, *Dahlia merckii*, *Echinacea pallida*, *Nepeta kubanica*, *Silene fimbriata* and *Thalictrum delavayi*.

CULTIVATION

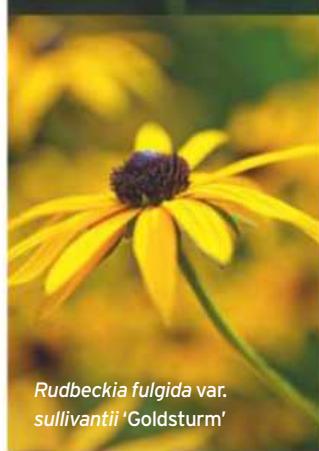
Perennials generally take longer than annuals to germinate (a month or more at times), so be patient. Sow tiny seeds on the surface of the compost and cover with a thin layer of vermiculite before pricking out into individual pots when they are large enough to handle. For larger seeds, sow directly into small modules, and pot on into 9cm pots. If you don't have a greenhouse, you can start your seedlings off on a windowsill inside the house instead.

WHERE TO BUY

Derry Watkins of Special Plants Nursery offers a good range of perennial seeds, including some unusual plants that you won't find elsewhere. 01225-891686; specialplants.net ▶



Verbascum blattaria 'Albiflorum'



Rudbeckia fulgida var. *sullivantii* 'Goldsturm'

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FULL CIRCLE

Online garden centre **Crocus** is offering a unique range of Christmas decorations this year. Pictured here is a wreath made from dried poppy seed heads and guinea-fowl feathers trimmed with crimson grosgrain ribbon. It has a diameter of 23cm and costs £29.99. crocus.co.uk

PLANTING COURSE

Treat yourself this Christmas by enrolling on the new **Planting Design Certificate** course at the London College of Garden Design. Starting on January 15, the six-month course is led by Andrew Fisher Tomlin and has an excellent line-up of guest speakers. Classes take place on Thursdays and Fridays in Kew, and the course costs £5,995. lcgd.org.uk



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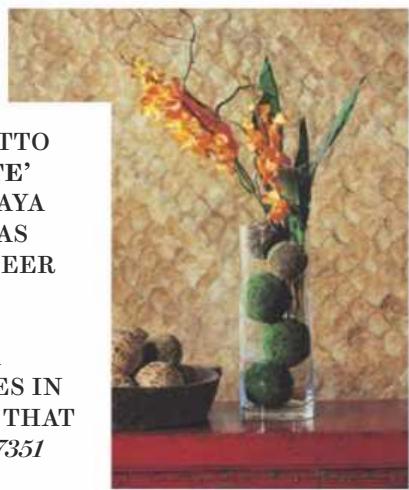
OUT AND ABOUT

EYE FOR STYLE

Lucy Asprey's keen eye for craftsmanship and design has ensured a unique collection of accessories at William & Son, for which she is the head of homeware. Should you have the good fortune to find her in the showroom, she will recount stories about each piece. These **stacking vessels** in glass, copper and wood, by Utopia & Utility, are created by a collaboration of small European workshops. From £1,250 each. 020-7493 8385; williamandson.com



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Latest launches... chic showrooms... hot buys... CAROLE ANNETT takes note



From historical palaces to family houses, the appeal of **encaustic tiles** shows no signs of abating. Artisans of Devizes has brought out a new version: 'Lattice', available in six colours, 20cm square, £3.90 a tile. 01380-720007; artisansofdevizes.com



CURVED LINES

This contemporary elliptical **brass coffee table**, 'Anemone', by Tatiana Tafur, would provide light relief in a room full of linear furniture. It measures 44 x 101.5cm diameter and costs £8,050. 020-7731 3777; tatianatafur.com

JOSHUA MONAGHAN; MARK LAWRENCE; AURA STUDIOS

SOFT TOUCH

Neptune's **cushions**, in a variety of neutral and punchy colours, will add warmth to a space and make welcome Christmas presents. Pictured here is 'Florence' (from left: otter, cranberry), cotton velvet, from £40 each. neptune.com



NEWS IN BRIEF Jo Malone London's seasonal goodies this year include an advent calendar with mini scents and body creams behind each door, £260. You can also buy mini scent bottles as tree ornaments, £24 each. jomalone.co.uk ▶



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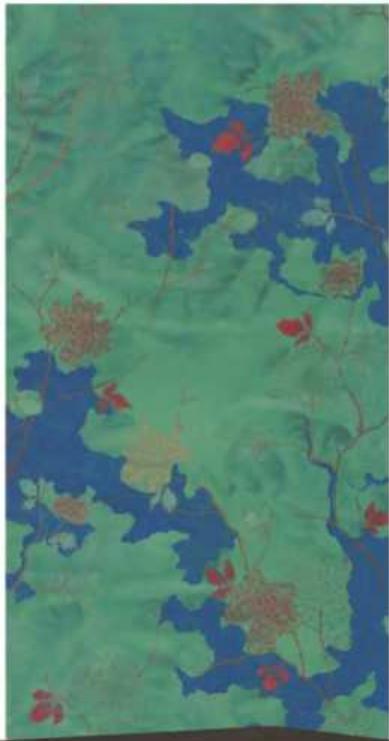
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WONDER WALLS

Fromental, the hand-painted wallpaper specialist, has joined the cast at Design Centre, Chelsea Harbour, making SW10 even more of a go-to destination. The showroom is in unit 3.21 on the third floor. This wallpaper, 'Empyrean' in terra, is a playful deconstruction of Fromental's classic chinoiserie designs.

fromental.co.uk
dcch.co.uk



SLEEK DESIGN

Hewn from oak with a dark chocolate stain, lacquered top coat and brass inlay, the 'Soho' **coffee table** from David Seyfried also has mitre joints so there are no visible fixings. It measures 43 x 120 x 64cm and costs £1,510. There is also a matching side table available, which measures 60 x 48 x 40cm and costs £1,060. 020-7823 3848; davidseyfried.com

AN ELEGANT EXAMPLE OF A POPULAR DESIGN, 'OCELOT', BY HODSOLL MCKENZIE, SHOWN HERE FROM TOP IN THE 585, 892 AND 985 COLOURWAYS, COSTS £90 A METRE. IT IS PART OF THE HARMONY COLLECTION, WHICH INCORPORATES SEVERAL CO-ORDINATING FABRICS. 020-7351 7115; ZIMMER-ROHDE.COM

NEWS IN BRIEF For a fine selection of winter accessories, head to Pickett, where you'll find gloves, scarves, bags and much more, along with pieces in new Lowick leather. You can also pick up stocking fillers, including luggage labels and cashmere gloves, from £29. pickett.co.uk

JOIN THE LIST

The List, *House & Garden's* new online directory of interior designers, architects and design professionals, continues to grow. Launching early next year, it will be available on our website, **HOUSE**, searchable by location and specialism. The companies featured here have signed up. Register online at houseandgarden.co.uk/thelist and you could be next. For more information, call 020-7152 3639, or email charlotte.richmond@condenast.co.uk □



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SPECIAL ONLINE OFFER

Spirit-boutique.com is the perfect place to find stylish presents. It has a collection of thousands of products from boutique retailers, ranging from home and fashion accessories to books and stationery. It was established by the organiser of the Spirit fairs, so you'll find all your favourite brands and much more. From November 9 to 16, you'll be able to get 15 per cent off all purchases from the website, by entering the code 'HG15' at the checkout.



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SHOPPING IN STYLE

Kick-start your Christmas festivities at an evening of shopping with Linley and *House & Garden* on Wednesday, December 9 at 6.30–8.30pm at Linley's Belgravia showroom. Gifts and accessories will be available to view and buy, while you are enjoying Nyetimber English sparkling wine and canapés. David Linley will give a short talk, there will be a Nyetimber wine tasting, and caviar brand Volzhenka will offer a tasting masterclass, plus special discounts on its products. There will also be a 15 per cent discount on all Linley products bought on the night. Tickets cost £45, including a gift bag. *To book, send a cheque made payable to 'Linley', with your name and address, to: Tildy Sturley, Linley Event, House & Garden, Vogue House, Hanover Square, London W1S 1JU.*

WIN £1,000 TO SPEND AT HARRODS

To celebrate the launch of *House & Garden*'s new *Christmas Unwrapped* supplement, **Harrods** is offering a £1,000 gift card to one lucky reader.

To enter the competition, go to houseandgarden.co.uk/winharrods* □



CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT Patina Dusk with Lotus motif. Exposed Concrete and Fumed Oak in Random Plank laying pattern. Shibori Sencha and Lulworth Stone in Checker Block laying pattern. All from the Amtico Signature collection, around £70 a square metre



CENTRE OF ATTENTION

Let contemporary flooring brand Amtico's striking Signature range be your home's unique mark

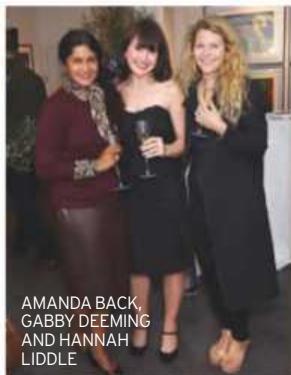
Realising your creative ambitions for your home interiors isn't always easy, particularly when it comes to flooring; the options available can often feel simply uninspiring. Not so with Amtico. Specialists in innovative and hard-wearing alternatives to conventional flooring, Amtico has the styled product range, flexibility and design capabilities to help you create a dream floor that is entirely unique to your home. Specifically, Amtico's premium Signature collection – which is designed and manufactured in Britain – offers a wealth of possibilities for custom-design flooring.

Wherever you might consider traditional hardwood, stone and ceramic flooring, Amtico offers the chance for something different. It is suitable for all areas of the home, especially bathrooms, bedrooms, kitchens and hallways, is warm under foot and compatible with under-floor heating. It is also water resistant and easy to maintain: the durable wear-layer is

designed to be extra hard-wearing. As if to underline the point, Amtico Signature products all come with a lifetime guarantee.

The Signature collection's 100-plus designs, which replicate natural wood and stone products, are entirely flexible and allow you to mix and match styles and finishes. Classic and contemporary laying patterns further enable you to create something truly original. Once you have an idea in mind, Amtico's online 'room visualiser' tool can assist you in selecting products and designs that meet your brief, as well as providing additional inspiration. How about adding a statement motif to create a focal point for your living space? Or choose borders to frame the floor and produce a striking visual effect? Amtico offers these – along with the freedom to think about flooring in a whole new way □

For further information, call 0121-222 8284, or visit amtico.com to request a brochure, samples or find your nearest retailer

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SMITHBLAINY NORTH
AND KATHARINE
HOWARDJOANNA WOOD
AND CHARLES
HANSARDCHRISTINA
FREYBERG,
EDWARD BULMER
AND LULU LYTLNICHOLAS
COLERIDGEFAY AND
ROGER
OATESGRAHAM
NOAKESCHARLIE MCCORMICK,
GABBY DEEMING AND
BEN PENTREATHANNABEL
OSBORNE AND
FABRICE BANA



CHARLOTTE WELLBAND, CLAIRE GERMAN AND CAROLINE FOSTER



TRUDI BALLARD, ROGER JONES, DOUGLAS MACKIE AND EMMA BURNS



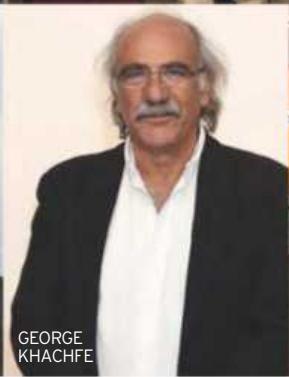
GUY OLIVER



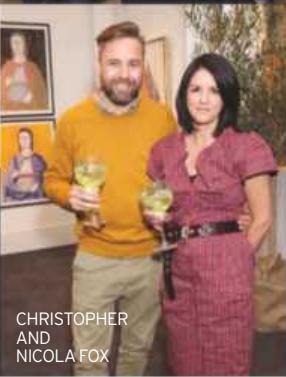
JULIA BOSTON AND CHARLES EDWARDS



CHRISTINE VAN DER HURD AND STUART OSBORNE



GEORGE KHACHFE



CHRISTOPHER AND NICOLA FOX



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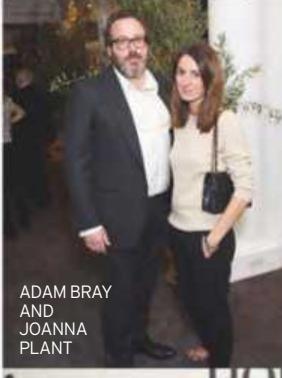


AUDREY CARDEN AND ELEANORA CUNIETTI

Always the place to be among the design elite, this year's party proved no exception. There was a palpable buzz about the new collections and London Design Festival' – Carole Annett



DAVID OLIVER



ADAM BRAY AND JOANNA PLANT



JAMES THOMAS, THIERRY THÉNAERS AND SIMONE DU BOIS



MIGUEL PEREIRA AND MARIA SANTACATERINA



MARGARITE ZOUPPAS AND ALAN PURCHASE



JENNIFER SHORTO, COLIN ORCHARD, PENNY MORRISON AND WILLIAM YEWARD



PAOLO MOSCHINO AND PHILIP VERHEYEN

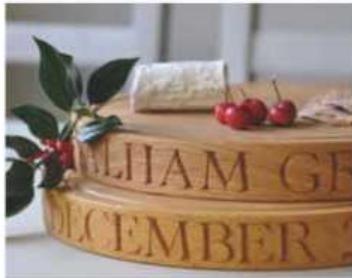


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LEFT *Flora in Calix Light*, 1950, watercolour.
BELOW *Capel-y-ffin*, 1926-7, watercolour

ORIGINAL VISION

ARIANE BANKES, curator of the current exhibition at Pallant House Gallery, profiles the artist David Jones, whose work spanned an impressive breadth of subjects

I first came across the paintings of David Jones (1895–1974) at Kettle's Yard in Cambridge, where I grew up. I would haunt that house and collection, put together by Jim and Helen Ede, and there in those light, spare rooms brimming with things of beauty were five paintings by Jones. Each was distinctive and together they showed the vast range of his art: a luminous seascape that plays with light and space; a curiously chivalric landscape of Lourdes; a mythic triad of trees titled *Vexilla Regis*, alluding to the Crucifixion; and the beautiful painted inscription 'Quia per incarnati'. Transcending them all was *Flora in Calix Light*, with its delicate abundance and mysteriously distant view.

I discovered that Jones was one of the most

original yet elusive artists of the twentieth century. An unusually gifted child, he later studied with Eric Gill to become a fine and imaginative engraver and illustrator of tales. Moving with Gill and his family to remote Capel-y-ffin in Wales, the rhythm of hills and water inspired some remarkable watercolours. Gradually, his focus moved inwards, to interiors and portraits of friends, and views from windows onto land and sea. A lively and successful member of the London art circuit in the Twenties, he was befriended by Ben and Winifred Nicholson and their circle. Few artists have excelled in so many forms – all of which are brought together in the Pallant House exhibition, the first major survey of his work for 20 years.

'David Jones: Vision and Memory' is at Pallant House Gallery, Chichester (pallant.org.uk), until February 21; admission £10. *'The Animals of David Jones'* is at the Ditchling Museum of Art + Craft, East Sussex (ditchlingmuseumartcraft.org.uk), until March 6; admission £6.50 ▷



EXHIBITIONS



THE WORLD OF

Marijke Varrall-Jones,

Director of ceramic art auction house Maak

→ 'My plan was to become a vet, but in my teens a summer job came up at a local auction house in Surrey prompting a dramatic change of direction. I enrolled on the BA in fine and decorative arts at Sotheby's Institute of Art in London, but it wasn't until I joined the contemporary ceramics department at Bonhams that I found my niche.'

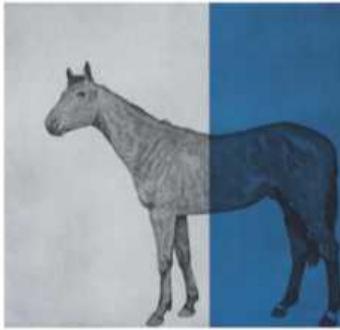
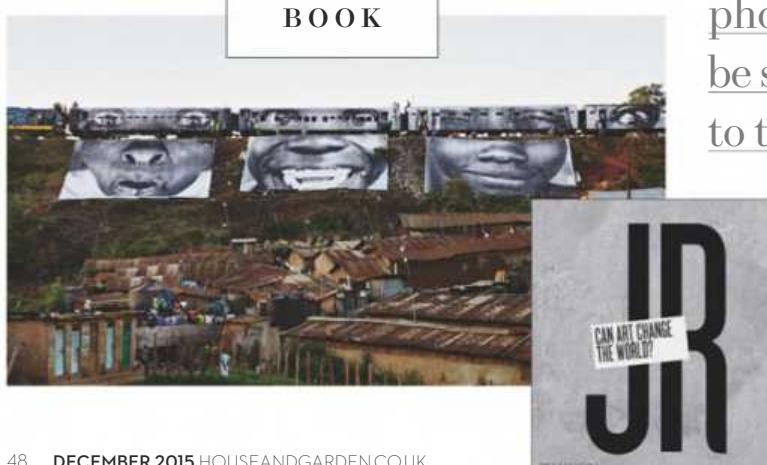
→ 'I was made head of department at Bonhams in 2007 and left in 2009 to establish Maak, where we hold two online auctions a year, offering a broad range of ceramics from the early Anglo-Oriental traditionalists to contemporary artists working today (pictured above are two pieces by German-born potter Hans Coper). Most of our clients are private collectors for whom ceramics are an obsession. The most modest doors can lead to some of the finest collections.'

→ 'Historically, studio pottery and contemporary ceramics have been quite a specialist area, but in the past few years, our audience has broadened. People appreciate the pleasure of living with one-off, handmade objects, and that's why I love ceramics – no two works are the same.'

→ 'The nature of the clay and the making process give many pieces a wonderful tactile quality, so that handling them is as much a part of the pleasure as the aesthetic enjoyment they provide. These objects have a soul that can resonate in a way you don't often find in our consumerist lives.'

Maak: maaklondon.com

BOOK

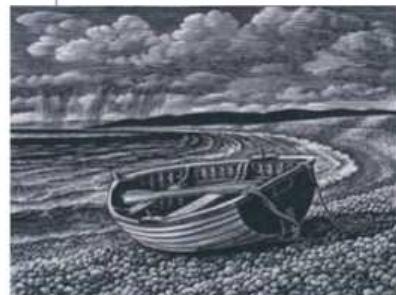


UNDER A GRAND
Grandy Art's annual group show in London exhibits the work of emerging British artists. The pieces all cost under £1,000, proving that big budgets are not a prerequisite when it comes to finding great art. *November 17–28; grandyart.com*

**ELISABETH FRINK:
THE PRESENCE
OF SCULPTURE**

This exhibition at Djanogly Gallery at Nottingham Lakeside Arts spans over 35 years of Frink's work, including distinctive sculptures of birds, beasts, figures and heads, with drawings, tools, studio records, film footage and photographs of the artist.

November 25–February 28, 2016; lakesidearts.org.uk



**BLACK TO WHITE –
PRINTMAKERS EXHIBITION**
Wood engraving is celebrated at the Winchester Discovery Centre, including works by Howard Phipps (left), Ann Tout and Kate Dicker, who all have an affinity with landscape.

November 14–January 10, 2016; hants.gov.uk/wdc

JR: Can Art Change the World? (Phaidon, £39.95)

The discovery of a camera on the Paris subway triggered French street artist JR's interest in photography. His flyposted work can be seen from the rooftops of Rio's favelas to the Israeli West Bank barrier. This is the first book to cover his career. JR's work is also on show at Lazarides Rathbone in Fitzrovia (lazinc.com) until November 12. ▷

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L-R: Chagal chair, Tubular side table, Danish cabinet with Capri lamps.

Textile art

EMILY TOBIN highlights three artists who use traditional techniques in innovative ways



PTOLEMY MANN

Ptolemy Mann's panels glow with saturated pigments; citric shades of lime and lemon blur into magenta or electric blue. It is this blending of colour that anchors her work. 'The dying of the threads is crucial to the outcome,' she explains. 'It can be quite tonal or the transition of colour might jump in contrast.' Unsurprisingly, she cites artists such as Donald Judd and Mark Rothko among her influences - just like their paintings, her woven works capture a gestural moment, rather like a brush mark on paper. Though colour is her prevailing interest, the form and line produced on the loom is key. The fine weave she creates is the same variety that is used in shirting fabric and allows for an infinite variety of straight lines. The combined effect is geometric, but unlike painting there is no room for error - once dye is applied, there is no going back. Ptolemy's minimal canvases and rainbow hues are testament to how a traditional skill can be boldly reinterpreted today. Prices start at £400; ptolemymann.com

CLOCKWISE FROM ABOVE Ptolemy Mann, *Interlocking Colour Study*, hand-dyed thread on panel, 150 x 100cm. Nazanin Kamali, *Intestine*, wool appliquéd, 47 x 52cm. Richard McVetis, *Proportions of a Male Figure*, hand stitch on wool, 70 x 53cm

There was once a time where curators would recoil at the mere mention of the word 'textile' or - worse still - 'woven'. This was deemed decorative art, best suited to a craft show and certainly not worthy of wall space in a mainstream gallery. But times have changed and, just as ceramics are no longer relegated to gloomy corners in a concession to the unconventional, textile art is, at long last, being championed.

BUYING ART

This recognition has been a long time coming. Textile art has a rich history and many artists working today use the same stitches and techniques that weavers were employing in the fifteenth century. Grayson Perry has played an important role in nudging textiles, tapestries and weaving into our consciousness and, in doing so, challenging our preconceptions of the craft. Admittedly, his vast tapestries are produced digitally, but they are important works that have toured the country and been universally lauded. Nazanin Kamali, Richard McVetis and Ptolemy Mann are three textile artists whose work should be considered within the realms of fine art.

NAZANIN KAMALI

The daughter of a dressmaker, Nazanin Kamali was already au fait with a needle and thread by the time she turned four. Though she originally trained as a furniture designer, she returned to textiles when she was pregnant with her first child. Patchwork blankets soon developed into artworks, notable for their graphic shapes and patterns. Despite her merry colour palette of pillar-box red, saffron yellow and cerulean blue, Nazanin's work is imbued with an underlying melancholia; her hand-stitched *Last Will and Testament* plainly declares, 'I wish my body to be cremated.' 'I like the idea of labouring over a document when everything in our society is digital,' she explains. In another appliquéd piece, arteries and veins crawl out from a plump heart, the simplified forms and bright colours challenging the rather macabre subject matter. Her work draws on the tradition of suzanis in Iranian culture, where the coverlets were used as dowries, and also the American tradition of quilting. Prices start at £1,000; nazaninkamali.com



RICHARD MCVETIS

'Seeding, bank stitch, running stitch, cross stitch...' says Richard McVetis listing the techniques he uses in his work. It's 'a limited vocabulary of mark making', he explains, but that is because his fascination is rooted in repetition - meticulous dots and crosses pock-mark his work in abstract constellations of pattern. Every one of these 'stipples' is a neat stitch in black thread. This might become a bead of light in an aerial view of a city or a tiny granule of black on a clean white surface, rather like a smattering of spilt pepper. 'I'm inspired by everything,' he says, 'marks on the floor, blots on the street.' These observances seep into his work in organic shapes and lines that are given a new majesty by his patient mark making. Prices start at £220; richardmcvetis.co.uk

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Words & pictures

What to give: the latest books chosen by ROSE DAHLSEN

[1] **CLASSIC CONTEMPORARY:**

THE DNA OF FURNITURE DESIGN
Tim Gosling (Thames & Hudson, £45)

Tim Gosling's ability to encapsulate the visual essence of a design uncannily echoes the first X-ray diffraction image of the DNA double helix taken by his late father, Professor Raymond Gosling, in 1950. As one of Britain's top interior and furniture designers, Tim believes that decoding a historical design's DNA is an intrinsic tool in creating successful contemporary work. He takes us on a journey through 300 years of design, from the eighteenth to the twenty-first centuries, relating key periods to his own projects and beautifully illustrating old and new in drawings and stunning photographs. Tim is an authoritative guide, whose passion for craftsmanship, materials and creative expression shines through the lively text. As a contemporary interpreter of historical styles, he excels in both word and practice. **Nicole Swengley**

[2] **THE CURATED HOUSE: CREATING STYLE, BEAUTY AND BALANCE**

Michael S Smith (Rizzoli, £45)

Consummate Californian Michael S Smith is well known for his star-studded client list; in 2009 he won the most coveted job of all - decorator to the President and First Lady. His latest book showcases his most recent projects alongside four of his own homes. It provides a glimpse into Michael's design philosophy and the workings of his magpie mind - inspirations range from 'a modernist Parisian salon' by Jean-Michel Frank, to a 'lusty movie character's boudoir'. As the architect Oscar Shamamian, a frequent collaborator, says, 'If ideas were bullets,

Michael Smith would be called "Machine Gun Mike".' Superbly illustrated, with generous images - some of which have graced the pages of *House & Garden - The Curated House* gives a wonderfully thorough and characterful account of Michael's enviable aesthetic. **Emily Tobin**

[3] **PARADISE AND PLENTY:**
A ROTHSCHILD FAMILY GARDEN

Mary Keen (Pimpernel Press, £50)

The Rothschild private family garden at Eyrthope is extraordinary. The garden was begun by Alice Rothschild in 1875 and, over the past 25 years, revitalised by Lord Rothschild with designer Mary Keen and head gardener Sue Dickinson. It is one of the most expertly and exquisitely managed productive gardens in the world. In her crisp, clear prose, Mary sets out the history, design and practical management of the garden. The book is beautifully illustrated by Tom Hatton's photographs. Double-page fold-outs reveal seasonal changes, and perfect black and white shots show the details of work. The gardeners' hands are as compelling as the plants. Gardening at this level requires enormous expertise, surgical skill and artistic flair. This book gives a rare and profound understanding of the sophistication of gardening at its most masterly. It is inspiring. **Kim Wilkie**

[4] **365 DAYS OF COLOUR**

IN YOUR GARDEN
Nick Bailey (Kyle Books, £25)

Colour in a garden is a vexed issue. One gardener's pleasing combination might cause another to cringe and because colour is chameleon in nature, know-how is needed to get it right. Nick Bailey has drawn extensively on his skill as a designer and experience as head gardener at Chelsea Physic Garden to produce a book that's practical and stimulating. He demystifies the 'colour wheel' - the alchemy by which one colour reacts alongside another - and is not afraid of using colour to amplify mood on even the darkest days of the year. The photographs, often of close-up plant combinations, are sumptuous, encouraging us to experiment and play with colour not just as gardeners, but also as artists. **Caroline Beck**

[5] **EVERY ROOM TELLS A STORY**

Kit Kemp (Hardie Grant, £30)

If there is one hotel style you need not be ashamed to covet, it is that of designer and Firmdale hotelier Kit Kemp. 'Travelling through any of my buildings should be like an adventure,' says Kit in this, her second book. She guides us in detail through the decoration of her latest projects, all of which are as bright, inventive and exciting as you would expect from the woman who has changed the face of modern hotels. Kit is generous with her sources, crediting artists, textile designers and collaborators. The photographs are packed with design ideas and, as Kit commands us to be bold with fabrics and colour, it almost begins to feel achievable. **Gabby Deeming** ▷



[6] **LANDMARK: A HISTORY OF BRITAIN IN 50 BUILDINGS**
Anna Keay and Caroline Stanford
(Frances Lincoln, £25)

The Landmark Trust, a registered charity, was founded 50 years ago by Sir John Smith. It not only saves old buildings, but also endows them with furniture and reading matter appropriate to their period, then allows visitors to stay in them. I have stayed at two Landmark Trust houses: Knowle Hill in Derbyshire and Warden Abbey in Bedfordshire. Both sites are part of larger complexes demolished in the eighteenth century. From the outset, Smith decided to take on places other agencies, such as the National Trust, wouldn't - old stations, cottages, follies, medieval towers, even Lundy Island. Today, Landmark owns 182 buildings and rising in Britain and, for this book, 50 of the finest have been selected and arranged in chronological order. In 300 beautifully illustrated pages, the 'before' photographs show what a terrible state some of the buildings were in. The text describes the founding of the trust, provides a history of the buildings and includes a bibliography. **Hugh St Clair**

[7] **SPACE, HOPE AND BRUTALISM: ENGLISH ARCHITECTURE 1945-1975**
Elain Harwood
(Yale University Press, £50)

It has taken Elain Harwood 18 years to write this monumental book (it weighs 5kg), which records the extraordinary flourishing of architecture in England after the Second World War. Elain began working at English Heritage in the Eighties and it's thanks to her efforts that many of the buildings cited in the book are now listed. Over 700 pages, she guides us through entire towns and cities, around housing estates, hospitals and schools, and luxury private homes. It is a reminder of many remarkable talents - famous names, such as Denys

Lasdun and Basil Spence, and others now forgotten. Mostly it is a celebration, with many beautiful photographs, but it is also a sobering record of what has been lost. 'So much has been altered or destroyed,' writes Elain, 'that it has become less a call to arms than an obituary.' **Marcus Field**

[8] **DO IT YOURSELF: 50 PROJECTS BY DESIGNERS AND ARTISTS**
Thomas Bärnthaler
(Phaidon, £19.95)

Fifty designers and artists from across the globe were tasked with sharing a DIY project that us mere mortals could make at home. Their brief was to create a piece of furniture, everyday object or decorative item that would be both inexpensive and - on the whole - uncomplicated to make. The result: 50 divergent designs that range in price and time taken to complete, from Faye Toogood's knotted wall tapestry (£30/180 minutes), to Benjamin Hubert's smart saddle-leather pencil holder (£19/60 minutes) and Ai Weiwei's fabric sock puppet (£10/90 minutes). Also included are Nils Holger Moormann's hanging pendant light fashioned from a salvaged tree branch, Matteo Thun's 'book ladder' secured with slender wooden dowels, Pauline Deltour's dual-functioning bench and shoe rack, and Steffen Kehrle's portable plywood toy box. Each entry has instructional sketches, photographs of the completed piece and a pithy insight into the designer's inspiration. Whether or not the designs metamorphose from the pages, it's a stylish collection of playful and practical projects. **RD**

[9] **RHS LESSONS FROM GREAT GARDENERS: FORTY GARDENING ICONS AND WHAT THEY TEACH US**
Matthew Biggs
(Mitchell Beazley, £14.99)

Neatly doubling as a history of garden design and planting, this book introduces a selection of luminaries from around the globe in a chronological series of biographies. These are tales of visionaries and geniuses: people whose dedication and obsession elevated their work above the ordinary. Why does André Le Nôtre trump Capability Brown? 'There is only one Versailles,' says Matthew Biggs. Despite their greatness, the subjects are also charming; the wholly comprehensible pleasure of gardening endeavour shines through. Illustrations of significant plants are attractive and the timeline quality reveals the reflexive nature of gardening and its responses to artistic and scientific developments. The book strives a bit too hard to be practical, but the titular lessons are inherent in the life stories, which are filled with joyous gems for keen gardeners. **Naomi Slade**

[10] **PLEASURES OF THE TABLE: A LITERARY ANTHOLOGY**
Selected by Christina Hardyment
(British Library, £20)

Should you ever find yourself clean out of salad, you can grow it in two hours flat: take fresh horse dung, lay it in a tub by a fire, sprinkle over some mustard seeds and, hey presto! Salad to cut in two hours. Grateful thanks to Hannah Glasse (1747). Or a cup of tea and a quick snack? Beat two egg yolks with sugar, pour your tea on top, stir well, drink hot. Sounds rather like a hangover cure, but when it appeared in *The Closet of the Eminently Learned Sir Kenelm Digby Opened* (1669), I bet it was right on trend. This delightful anthology, arranged under eight themes, including Love Bites and Simple Pleasures, blends the intriguingly unfamiliar with delicious reminders. **Joanna Simon** □





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Celestial sheers

VIOLA LANARI fills her net with a cosmic array of gossamer-thin patterned and embroidered voiles

PHOTOGRAPHS SARAH HOGAN

1 'Garden of Eden' (ivory), by MYB Textiles, cotton, 175cm wide, £90.92, from Tissus d'Hélène.

2 'Turandot' (906), viscose/polyester, 296cm wide, £87.60, from Christian Fischbacher.

3 'Minos' (feather grey), by Black Edition, polyester/viscose, 315cm wide, £105, from Romo.

4 'Cameroon' (white on white), by Martyn Lawrence Bullard, linen, 130cm wide, £186, from Tissus d'Hélène. 5 'Altamira' (white), polyester/viscose, 325cm wide, £107.10, from Casamance.

6 'Betony Trellis' (white), cotton, 138cm wide, £76, from Colefax and Fowler. 7 'Duo' (009), by Métaphores, linen, 300cm wide, £179.40, from Abbott & Boyd. 8 'Diana Madras' (alabaster), cotton, 172cm wide, £280, from Ralph Lauren Home. All prices per metre ▶



1 'Paillettes', linen, 140cm wide, from £399, from C&C Milano. 2 'Grace' (jasper white), linen/cotton, 156cm wide, £110, from Mark Alexander. 3 'Yoko' (steel), polyester/viscose, 135cm wide, £45, from Harlequin. 4 'Hainan Burn-Out' (mint), by No9 Thompson, linen mix, 139cm wide, £64, from Fox Linton. 5 'Perlino', linen, 140cm wide, from £325, from C&C Milano. 6 'Vineyard Linen Eyelet' (cottage white), linen, 147cm wide, £208, from Ralph Lauren Home. 7 'Ostro' (moonbeam), by Zinc Textile, viscose mix, 297cm wide, £110, from Romo. 8 'Meander' (smoke), by Anni Albers in association with the Josef & Anni Albers Foundation, linen, 133cm wide, £120, from Christopher Farr Cloth. All prices per metre. For suppliers' details, see Stockists page □

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Christmas table decorations

Ruth Sleightholme creates charming settings for celebrations, making use of foliage, paper crafts and decorative dinnerware

PHOTOGRAPHS SARAH HOGAN

beautiful BOUGHS

For a magical sense of occasion, attach a bough of any relatively straight, narrow tree – we used birch – to each side of the back of a chair. Attach with wire or cable ties and cover with a decorative ribbon, or go wild with a pretty coloured twine. As long as the branch touches the floor, it won't tip the chair over. The position of this arrangement means that views across the table are uninterrupted, and a cosy under-the-arbour atmosphere prevails. We've hung the branches with bells and baubles for Christmas, but you could add white ribbons for weddings or sweets for birthdays.



Birch **boughs**, £18 each, from Porters Foliage. Tin **bells**, £2 for a pack of about 30 assorted sizes, from Hobbycraft. **Tablecloth** (off white), linen, £26 a metre, from The Hackney Draper. Vintage **table** with cast-iron legs and wooden top, 70 x 200 x 70cm, £2,000, from The Conran Shop. Painted oak **chairs**, 'Orangerie', 86 x 54 x 51cm, £1,814 each, from Howe. Stoneware **dishes**, by Kasper Würtz, £60 each, from Sigmar. Glassware, 'Ultima Thule', by Tapio Wirkkala for Iittala, **pitcher**, £79, and **goblets**, £19.50 each, from Skandium. Vintage silver **cutlery**, £26 for set of six, from RE. Vintage **cookie cutters**, from £5 each, from The Vintage Kitchen Store. Linen **napkins**, 'Emily' (salt), £31 for six, from Neptune. Glass **baubles** (silver), £7.50 for three, from The Conran Shop. Polyester grosgrain **ribbon**, 2.5cm wide, £2.85 a metre, from Vanderhurd ▷



clear WINNERS

Balloons can be a year-round table embellishment, but noting the ethereal quality of these completely clear, bubble-like balloons, we filled them with helium and anchored them to baubles for a dreamy Christmas table. Papercut artist Lora Avedian, of Language of Flora, created plant shapes – eucalyptus, thistles, fir and hellebores – which we pasted onto the balloons once inflated, using watered-down PVA glue. You can do exactly the same thing with simpler shapes, such as stars or leaves.

Plastic **balloons**, 'Deco Bubble' (clear), £2.65 each, from Click4Balloons. Hand-cut paper **foliage shapes**, from £8 a piece, from Language of Flora. Hardwood **table**, 77 x 229 x 91cm, £2,800; softwood **chairs**, 90 x 44 x 40cm, £3,600 for eight; all from Maison Artefact. **Tablecloth** (celadon), linen, £26 a metre, from The Hackney Draper. Antique silvered glass '**Witch's Balls**', from £72 each, from Guinevere. Porcelain small **bowls** (pink), £24.95 each; porcelain **pasta bowls** (pink), £45.95 each; all by Mud Australia, from Harrods. Stainless-steel **cutlery**, 'Tris' (black), £176.80 for a 16-piece set, from Broste Copenhagen. Ceramic leaf-shape **chargers**, £49 each, from William Yeoward. Cut crystal **milk bottles**, by Samantha Sweet, £125 each, from The Conran Shop. Wall **paint**, 'Mizzle', £38 for 2.5 litres matt emulsion, from Farrow & Ball

gold RUSH

A combination of minty white tableware and gold accents is a picture of sophistication for Christmas. While this scheme looks smart, the table runner and napkins are made from paper. We hand-stamped the napkins with snowflake motifs, which is an easy way to decorate a paper napkin and can also be applied to the table runner.



spring STARS

Foliage sprigs have a certain natural symmetry, so snipping a few sprigs and branches up and arranging them as star shapes will look Christmassy. We suggest mixing – here we used fir, rosemary, holly and various shrubs – for visual richness. A stem of rosemary can be bent into a circle and tied together to create a quick and pretty place-card holder.

GOLD RUSH (above) Paper **runner** and **napkins** (both from a perforated roll), £3.95 for 4.8 metres, from So Raise Your Glasses. Rubber **stamp**, 'Snowflake', £2.50; and **ink pad**, 'Imperial Blue', £4.45; both from Blade Rubber. Hardwood **table**, 77 x 229 x 91cm, £2,800; softwood **chairs**, 90 x 44 x 40cm, £3,600 for eight; all from Maison Artefact. Stoneware **dinner plates** and **bowls**, by Wonki Ware, £24.50 each; large porcelain **bowls** (matt gold), £365 each; small porcelain **bowls with spoons** (matt gold), £42.50 each; cardboard star **wine-glass tags**, £3.45 for a pack of 50; all from Summerill & Bishop. Leaf-shape gilded porcelain **dishes**, by William Yeoward, from £72, from Harlequin. **Wine glasses**, by Cassini, £15 each; paper **plant bags**, £32 each; all from The Conran Shop. Metal-cuffed **tumblers**, 'Aran', £16 each, from Rowen & Wren. Stainless-steel **cutlery**, 'Turini', £90 for a 16-piece set, from Habitat. Baci de Dama **biscuits**, £17.95 for a 875g jar, from Carluccio's

SPRIG STARS (left) Mixed **sprigs**, from £1.99 for a rosemary plant, from Wyeval Garden Centres. Stoneware **plate**, by Wonki Ware, £24.50, from Summerill & Bishop. Glazed terracotta **bowl**, 'Star', by Astier de Villatte, £75, from Liberty. Place-card **calligraphy**, £1 per card, from Lu Guthrie. Star-shape glass **baubles**, £10 for six, from The Conran Shop. Hardwood **table**, 77 x 229 x 91cm, £2,800, from Maison Artefact ▷

colour SPLASH

For a bright and festive party table, create garlands with paper cake cases and hang them from the underside of the table like a ra-ra skirt. Punch holes in a stack of cake cases – we used a Japanese screw punch from Shepherd's, £35, for neat, overhead hole-punching – and thread them onto twine, knotting it to space them. This type of skirt only really works where chairs aren't needed, for example on a buffet or drinks table. The homemade garlands can also be used on walls or as doorway streamers.

Recently finished decorating? Dig out the old paint charts and create bright table confetti with a craft punch – we used a 'Christmas Snowflake Sectored Punch' in medium, £5, from Hobbycraft



Paper **cake cases**, £5.97 for a pack of 144 assorted colours, from Lakeland. Oak **table**, 'Harper', 74 x 240 x 110cm, from £4,875, from Pinch. Ceramic **jugs**, £80 each, from Irving & Morrison. American milk-glass **cake stands**, large, £84, and medium, £55, from RE. Coloured glass **tumblers**, 'Bumba', £36 each, from Summerhill & Bishop. Wall **paint**, '17V02', £37 for 2.5 litres matt emulsion, from Little Greene ▶



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The same model trees make lovely embellishments bound onto a wrapped present with twine to hold them in place. Mini kraft gift box, £1.75, from Paperchase. Cotton twine, £1.69 for 38 metres, from Ryman

frosty LAYERS

Cake stands make perfect centrepieces, mainly due to their height and wedding-cake-style layers. We created a city-park-under-snow arrangement here, using trees from a model railway shop. Soak some oasis and mold it into a cake stand with bowls, cover with snow spray, push in an arrangement of trees – model trees have spiked bases – and complete with a final dusting of snow spray. We topped it off with a beautiful model house from Chisel & Mouse, which we piled with fake snow.



Glazed terracotta **cake stands**, from left: 'Peggy', by Astier de Villatte, £445, from Liberty; 'Sobre' (on bottom), £235, and 'Simple' (on top), £225; both by Astier de Villatte, from Summerill & Bishop. **Model trees**, from 67p each, from 4D Model Shop. Plaster **model house** with etched metal details, '397 Bleecker Street', 29.5 x 13.5 x 6cm, £140, from Chisel & Mouse. Vintage pine **farm table**, 74 x 226 x 81cm, £4,000; and vintage bentwood **chairs**, by Thonet, £229 each; all from The Conran Shop. Bone china **plates**, 'X-Ray Lace', £16 each, from RE. Enamelled metal **cutlery**, £18.50 each, from William Yeoward. Short **wine glasses**, 'Mia', £26 for four, from LSA. Tall **wine glasses**, by Cassini, £14 each, from The Conran Shop. Metal **fish**, £89 each, from Plümo. **Snow spray**, £3.99 a 366g can, from Clas Ohlson. **Snowflakes** made with 'Christmas Snowflake Scented Punch' (medium), £5, from Hobbycraft. Wall **paint**, '23D06', £37 for 2.5 litres matt emulsion, from Little Greene □

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LIGHTS

LED fairy lights, 'White Pom Pom', £25 for 2.4 metres, from PomPom Galore. pompom-galore.co.uk



STOCKING

'Large Red Stocking', £12, from The Conran Shop. conranshop.co.uk

STYLING: ARTA GHANBARI; SADIE STRAIGHT LEG TROUSER: £95, FROM WHISTLES. PHOTOGRAPH: ISTOCKPHOTO/GETTY IMAGES



Rita at the door of her house in London, decorated with a wreath by John Carter

I don't usually put up a Christmas tree. That's a bit 'Bah, humbug', I know, but I dread returning home after spending Christmas and New Year away to find a fully decorated skeleton surrounded by a pile of needles. However, I don't let this decision prevent me from making other embellishments. A chimneypiece is an excellent area to focus on if you don't have room for a tree.

Garlands of fir exude that Christmas scent that, since childhood, has made me eager for the big day. John Carter (johncarterflowers.com) likes to drape everything – banisters, sideboards, mantles and tables – with fir. His floristry is most luxurious, and his excellent tips for Christmas, unsurprisingly, reflect this generosity of spirit. 'I don't like anything mean or cheap looking at Christmas; it must be full and rich,' says John. He favours masses of green and silver leaves: eucalyptus leaves and pods and 'all manner of conifers', because they come in so many shades of green and are so easy to get hold of. Most gardens can supply quite a lot of evergreen foliage, but, if not, Homebase (homebase.co.uk) or B&Q (diy.com) usually have a good selection. For that evocative Christmas scent, he says, you want Norwegian blue pine – and plenty of it.

To these rich, green garlands, John adds all sorts of treats, from walnuts and chestnuts to sweets.

Garlands of fir exude that Christmas scent that makes me eager for the big day

This year, I want to use vintage miniature decorations and candy canes – Semmalina-Starbags in southwest London is a good source for both – along with scarlet ribbons and popcorn garlands, an American tradition I am pinching. The other Americanism I love is stockings hung from the mantelpiece – traditionalists can always transfer the filled stockings to the foot of the bed

on Christmas Eve, just to ensure the magic of waking up with that weighty bundle at your feet.

The best way to use flowers in the house is to have them growing in pots. A large jasmine plant or gardenia in the hall will greet you with that heady scent every time you walk through the front door. Amaryllis, paperwhites, even the dreaded poinsettias are all cheering during these short days; anything that slips into a cachepot is happily low-maintenance. I love amaryllis in white, pale- or blush-pink shades, but the chicest of all is the very dark, velvety red variety.

An antique washbasin, filled to bursting with white or pale-pink poinsettias and displayed on a centre table is pretty. Pots and pots of paperwhites

smell delicious; it's encouraging that something so pale, delicate and scented is flowering at this time of year. The florist Willow Crossley (willowcrossley.com) ties twigs to paperwhites to keep them standing straight while retaining their rustic charm. This year, she is also wrapping pots of hellebores in baking paper and twine for the table.

If you are too stretched to create your own garlands or Christmas wreaths, don't think twice about calling in the professionals. John Carter has always been responsible for mine – to my husband's horror, until his sisters all swooned at the full, rich and luxurious creation hanging on the door of our Welsh hovel on Christmas Eve □

Rita Notes

RITA KONIG recommends bringing in swathes of flowers and foliage this Christmas

PHOTOGRAPH CRAIG FORDHAM

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Benji studied modern languages at Oxford Brookes University, then spent two years at Bonhams auction house, latterly specialising in silverware. In 1995, he completed a one-year diploma in interior design at London's KLC School of Design. After working for Bosanquet Ives, which makes bespoke carpets, Benji relocated to Bordeaux and subsequently Landes, in southwest France. There, he worked on various projects, ranging from the complete restoration of a seventeenth-century farmhouse in Landes to a presbytery in the Tarn.

In 2003, he returned to London and set up his practice. Benji works mainly on private residences and specialises in country houses. He is passionate about restoration, but also loves to 'put a modern slant on things'. 07807-281956;

benjilewisdesign.co.uk

INTERIOR DESIGNER



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP Benji in the sitting room, with a Fifties chair from The Furniture Cave, covered in 'Ermine' horsehair by John Boyd Textiles. The sofa is covered in 'Constance' linen from Colefax and Fowler (now discontinued). An open-tread staircase leads from the dining room up to the sitting room

Benji Lewis

JUDITH WILSON finds out how the designer gave a sense of identity and flow to the new layout of this west London house

All my business comes via word of mouth and many jobs are for repeat clients,' says interior designer Benji Lewis. This four-storey, nineteenth-century family home in Chiswick is the third project he has worked on for the owners. They had already commissioned an architect to remodel the ground floor and lower the level of the garden. Now, a newly created rear sitting room leads off the entrance hall and appears to 'float' above a new lower-ground-floor rear dining room, which has direct access to the garden. The dining room links to the existing basement kitchen, which benefits from the additional natural light.

'The architect had drawn up the shell of what he envisaged for the building; I was commissioned to establish an identity for each new space and establish a flow,' Benji says. The brief was to advise on furniture layouts, colour schemes and soft furnishings, as well as lighting plans for the new living spaces and a basement TV room at the front. 'I wanted to create a hospitable mood – a look that was friendly, yet cool.'

The sitting room had a new mahogany parquet floor, with an anthracite-coloured concrete floor in the dining room. Benji painted the walls in these rooms in 'All White' by Farrow & Ball. 'I like a proper white: crisp and clear,' he says. ▷



Benji loves to weave strong colour and robust textures into his projects. 'It's a fantastic way to achieve a comfortable family look,' he says. His clients wanted to reuse their existing furniture, previously bought for a modern house, so Benji gave the sofa and chaise longue new life by reupholstering them in a floral Colefax and Fowler linen. But for contrast, he had the newly sourced Fifties chair and footstool covered in a black John Boyd Textiles horsehair. 'Juxtaposing colours, textures and periods is a brilliant way to add depth to a home,' he says.

He is a thoughtful decorator: his designs often include clever visual references that are personal to the client. In the sitting room, he has referenced his client's Anglo-Indian roots by using a subtle palm-tree motif. He combined an over-scaled period photograph of the Nile with de Gournay's 'Scenes of India' hand-painted wallpaper on an opposite wall. A Sixties brass palm-tree lamp enhances the theme.

While the sitting room retains its original ceiling height and feels intimate, the dining room has soaring four-metre-high walls. 'To avoid a tall, narrow feeling, I've used mirrors along the wall,' says Benji. This maximises light from the glass doors to the garden, while the reflections create width. Furniture and lighting was chosen to balance the proportions. The chandelier, from Paolo Moschino for Nicholas Haslam, is one metre high and the leather chairs around the table, originally used in the Old Bailey, look suitably chunky. These are accompanied by nineteenth-century French chairs in red velvet.

For Benji, designing a family home means creating a very welcoming environment. 'I like proper upholstered furniture, with hand-tied springs and horsehair stuffing,' he says. He will design bespoke occasional pieces if he can't find a suitable one. For the sitting room, he created a block side table, made from MDF on an antique brass plinth. In the TV room, he has used the same design, spray-painted to match the brightly coloured abstract painting by Derek Stockley that hangs above the sofa.

In contrast to the light-filled reception rooms, the TV room presented a different challenge. Rather than fight the lack of light, Benji has ramped up a moody scheme. 'I love dark walls – they are an understated way of creating drama.' True to form, he painted the room in 'Chocolate Colour' by Little Greene and added splashes of colour: the wonderfully kitsch Sixties lamps were originally from a hotel lobby in Miami.

Asked why he thinks his faithful clients return to him time and again, Benji considers carefully. 'I like things to be comfortable,' he concludes. 'But, above all, my clients should always feel fabulous in their own homes.'



2



Added insight

Which three words sum up your style?

Instinctive, colourful, bold.

What's your obsession?

I'm crazy about texture, particularly fabrics and floor finishes. I love a wonderful linen with a fabulous print or embroidered detail. I'm also drawn to chunky sisal, which feels and looks strong and tribal.

Do you have a favourite design trick?

I enjoy using oversize mirror panels opposite one another in a room. Mirror glass can add light, visually extend the dimensions of a space and create vistas that go on forever.

Share a contact from your designer address book.

Sinclair Till (sinclairtill.co.uk) for floor coverings. Its shop on Wandsworth Road in southwest London is intoxicating, with a huge variety of product and a mouth-watering array of custom colour options.

1 In the dining room, seen here reflected in a mirror panel, Benji has reused the clients' existing nineteenth-century refectory table and, for an eclectic look, teamed it with French nineteenth-century carver chairs in red velvet, sourced from James Jackson on Lillie Road, southwest London, and leather chairs reclaimed from the Old Bailey. The 'Dove' chandelier by Paolo Moschino for Nicholas Haslam is hand carved, with a bespoke dark brown finish. This project has been a triumph of reusing the clients' existing furniture in a new way. Benji originally designed the copper, brass and mahogany sideboard for their previous house, but its chunky proportions fit nicely in the new dining room.

2 The architect had already specified a dark cork floor in the basement TV room and, because the room lacked natural light, Benji chose a moody scheme, with flashes of colour inspired by the clients' existing painting. Walls are painted in 'Chocolate Colour' by Little Greene, inspired by the clients' George Smith sofas, which are upholstered in 'Café Noir', a George Smith basketweave linen. The Sixties lamps, with their original shades, were sourced from the Stephen Sprake antique shop in Church Street, northwest London. The bespoke shagpile rug is from Capitol Carpets □



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In focus: THE LIST

We have always known this is a nation rich in creative talent. That's why *House & Garden* is launching The List, a new online directory of design professionals. DAVID NICHOLLS highlights three new members



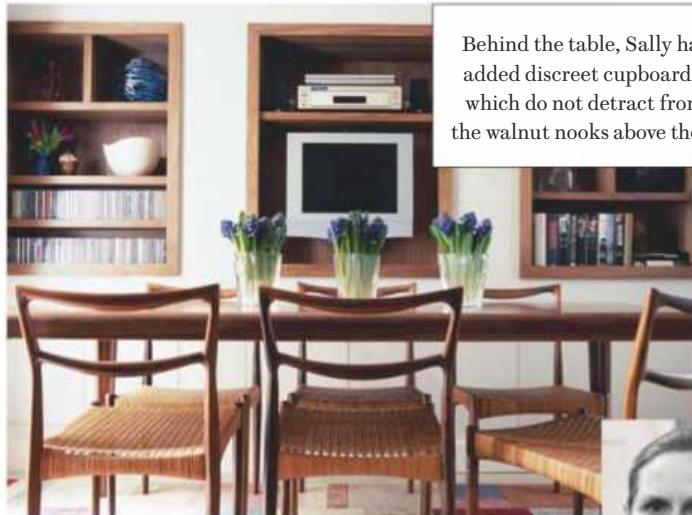
Ursula has created a dreamy den in this child's room, framing a cupboard bed with pretty gingham curtains

Room to Bloom

► In 2011, the London-based Dutch designer Ursula Wesselingh had an epiphany and set up Room to Bloom, an interior-design practice dedicated to creating spaces for children ranging from tots to teens. 'I was looking for a niche, something to specialise in, and I had noticed in my work that I always enjoyed working on children's rooms,' she says. 'The idea stuck.' She likes the smaller scale of these projects, which can last just a few months from initial brief to final installation. 'I love the use of colour and pattern, and the cuteness of children's rooms,' she says, 'but I always start with what is there. It is important for me to visit the client's house first so I can design something that will work with the rest of the house.' room-to-bloom.com

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Behind the table, Sally has added discreet cupboards, which do not detract from the walnut nooks above them



Sally Dernie Interior Design

► There is a relaxed sense of elegance to the work of Sally Dernie, a designer who retrained at KLC School of Design after a successful career as a solicitor. She set up her practice in 2003 and, since then, has honed her skills on houses and flats round the country. She has a knack for sourcing the perfect textiles and accessories. Sally says that she often ends up working on a house over a number of years, as the clients have the time or the money to allow. Intriguingly, she is also a keen equestrian who competes in British Dressage competitions. This passion led to her transformation of a Grade II-listed threshing barn into a handsome stable. sallydernie.com

April Russell design



► This international company was established in London in 1998 and followed up with a New York office in 2014. April and her team produce top-notch interiors in a wide range of styles, but what is most striking in so much of their work is the way that art pieces are integrated into the schemes. The art services element of the business can include anything from integrating an existing collection into a design to advising on restoring and framing, or even starting a new collection. To get a feel for April's design philosophy and taste, it's worth looking at the excellent 'Insights' blog on her website. aprilrussell.com □



April has used French vintage furniture and large vintage photographs in this Palm Beach house

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LIFESTYLE

Doing it by the book

Leaving behind careers in publishing and photography in London, Rosamund and Bill de la Hey set up an award-winning bookshop and delicatessen in the Scottish Borders, which has become an important part of the community

TEXT NONIE NIESEWAND | PHOTOGRAPHS ANDREW MONTGOMERY



Rosamund and Bill walking
their two Labradors



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In the village of St Boswells in the Scottish Borders, Rosamund de la Hey and her husband Bill celebrate Christmas both at home in their converted manse, and at The Mainstreet Trading Company, the award-winning bookshop and delicatessen that they set up in 2008.

Along with their children Wilf, Isobel and Archie, now 14, 12 and nine, they moved from London five years earlier to this little village off the beaten track. 'Our goal was that wherever we moved outside London, it had to be within 10 minutes' drive of good friends and, ideally, no more than an hour from Edinburgh,' says Rosamund. 'St Boswells had the bonus of being a 45-minute drive from Berwick station and the train to London.' As the marketing director of children's literature at Bloomsbury (she was one of the first people to read J K Rowling's manuscript for *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone* in 1996), Rosamund commuted to London for the first four years: 'I got a lot of reading done.'

The house they bought began as a two-room bothy, which had been expanded in 1767 into a staid, sash-windowed Georgian manse for the local minister. With further interventions – the Victorians added rooms and in the Thirties it acquired two small side wings – the manse remained a church property until the Seventies. The de la Heys rationalised the space by adding a west wing to match the existing east wing and creating a light-filled bathroom and dressing room above a new conservatory. They hired a local architect to turn a large, derelict garage into a glass-fronted room, which began, rather extravagantly, as a place to play table tennis, with one wall lined with a blackboard for scores, but turned into a year-round space for entertaining when they added a small kitchen.

Not far away is St Boswells' old auction house, which the de la Heys bought in 2007 and converted into The Mainstreet Trading Company; it was opened for business in 2008. 'We have the luxury of a mile's commute to work – we should really walk or cycle, but this never quite seems to happen,' says ▷

OPPOSITE Bill outside The Mainstreet Trading Company delicatessen, which sells artisan cheeses. THIS PAGE CLOCKWISE FROM TOP Bill with game bird supplier Johnny Rutherford of Burnside Farm Foods. Choosing winter vegetables at Mertoun Gardens. Foxy Blonde beer, brewed in the Borders, is available in the deli. The deli stocks fresh olives and roasted nuts (also bottom centre). Christmas baubles in Mainstreet's home department





Rosamund. Bill, who had worked as a photographer in London, set up the bookshop café, which quickly turned into a meeting place for lunches, launches and a browse through the books – over 7,500 of them. It's also a place where Bill says he 'can get really nerdy' about things like coffee beans: what type they are, where they're grown and how they're washed.

Despite existing in the age of Amazon, in seven years, Mainstreet has become a huge success. Rosamund's book-selling mentor is Patrick Neil, co-owner of Jaffé & Neale, who listed every book that had sold more than one copy in a year in his Oxfordshire bookshop to help her select her opening stock. 'The single most generous thing he could have done,' she says.

Mainstreet Trading has won several awards, including the Bookseller Industry Awards' Independent Bookseller of the Year 2012, and it was one of two British businesses highly commended in 2015 in the Best Small Shops competition. Its delicatessen, which opened in 2012, followed by a home department, was awarded the Farm Shop & Deli Awards' Deli of the Year in 2014 and has the feeling that comes from places where people, warmed and nurtured, get the squirrelly impulse to store treats. 'Selling food is complicated,' says Bill. 'But it turns out that buying what I like somehow worked.'

'It's the same with books,' says Rosamund. 'It is all about personal taste. I am passionate about children's books and we run two book groups year round and a busy author events programme.' This autumn, the Mainstreet team converted a vintage Citroën fire engine into a pop-up bookstall to take children's books and their authors to local schools.

Their achievement is all the more amazing considering Rosamund was diagnosed with breast cancer in February 2008 and was receiving treatment when the bookshop opened in June that year. 'I do quite like number crunching, but at the time it felt like I had wasps in my brain.'

Today, the de la Heys employ 14 people. Among these are deputy manager Vivian Bannerman, deli manager Shaun Fagan and deputy manager of the home department Philippa Henley, who are all also graphic artists and have made the shop windows famous. 'It's not the way to make a fortune, but it's a ▷

THIS PAGE ANTICLOCKWISE FROM TOP Rosamund with an employee in the bookshop café. An audio book station for children under the stairs. Framed portraits of authors who have held talks and book signings at Mainstreet. The non-fiction section decorated for Christmas. The Christmas-themed window display painted by illustrator Helen Stephens. OPPOSITE Rosamund organises greeting cards in the children's section of the shop





Don't forget!

- CHEESE
- CHEESE AND CHIPS
- SMOKED SALMON
- BREAD
- WINE
- CHARCUTERIE
- NON-ALCOHOLIC
+ HAMPERS

DON'T DELAY.
SELL OUT QUICK



THIS PAGE CLOCKWISE FROM TOP Bill and Rosamund in their converted garage, which is now a glass-fronted entertaining space with a small kitchen (also bottom right). The drawing room in the former manse. OPPOSITE CLOCKWISE FROM TOP A bench is stacked with books in the converted garage. Facing this, the table is laid with Christmas fare. A wreath made by Rare & Ordinary. Rosamund with dealer Diana Muir, who supplies antiques to Mainstreet's home department, in the sitting room



way to live and makes us part of our community,' says Rosamund.

There are portraits on the walls of bestselling authors, who make time on their international literary circuits to sign books and talk at Mainstreet, from Margaret Atwood and Maggie O'Farrell to Clare Balding and Jeremy Paxman. And Rosamund has designed a welcoming space for children to discover books, displaying them at just the right height for each age group to pick a title. Under the stairs are friendly little 'book burrows' where children can listen to audio books.

To herald the advent of Christmas, artists are enlisted to decorate the shop windows, while in the home department, Christmas decorations and presents 'for everyone from Great Uncle Bertie to the nephew who's 10' are illuminated by fairy lights and glowing logs in an old wood stove. A pop-up flower shop, Rare & Ordinary, opens in the pend – the Scottish term for the arched passageway that adjoins the shop – to sell Christmas wreaths and bouquets, hand tied by Sheena Wichary, the Emmy-winning costumer designer for *Game of Thrones*.

The de la Heys moved to St Boswells for a better quality of life. Surrounded by some of the most beautiful countryside in the Borders, walking their two Labradors is never a chore. The River Tweed, which Bill fishes, is just down the hill from their house, and the children take every opportunity to swim in the river when the sun is shining. Many winter weekends have been spent watching Wilf and Archie playing rugby in Melrose, and Bill and Isobel are building up a menagerie. 'We have 17 chickens and eight ducks, including an Indian runner duck that seems to have adopted our pretty little Call ducks,' says Rosamund.

Each year on Christmas Eve, the de la Heys close up shop at 5.30pm and put up the Christmas tree at the manse, which sparkles with etched glass snowflakes and mirrored and smoky glass ornaments. The children chalk greetings on the blackboard in the converted garage before the fun and games begin □

*The Mainstreet Trading Company: 01835-824087;
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EDIT

*Inspirational INTERIORS, beautiful GARDENS,
fascinating people, compelling stories*



PAGE

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The front door of
an Oxfordshire
farmhouse decorated
for Christmas





DUTY OF CARE

Thomas Clifford and his wife Clarissa, an interior designer, have risen to the challenge of restoring Ugbrooke Park in Devon, enhancing its beautifully proportioned rooms, making use of once-forgotten furniture and rehanging family portraits

TEXT LIZ ELLIOT | PHOTOGRAPHS SIMON BROWN

In the morning room, a sofa and armchair, both covered in fabrics from Claremont, are positioned around an ottoman topped with a leopard-print rug. A column lamp from Vaughan sits on the console table at the side of the sofa, behind which doors lead into the drawing room



In July of this year, Thomas, the 14th Baron Clifford of Chudleigh, and his second wife Clarissa, handed over the running of Ugbrooke Park in Devon to Alexander, his eldest son. Before leaving, they held a party for the team of over 50 people who had, over the past 20 years, worked with them to bring the house back to life. Each person was given a book containing their own photograph, among pictures of Ugbrooke's inhabitants past and present, and a sincere message of thanks from both of them for the 'love and care of so many talented people whose combined hard work and dedication has restored both house and garden'.

Tom came to Ugbrooke as a boy in the Fifties. His parents, who had been living in Australia, decided to take over the house when his great uncle who – being without an heir and having been through two wars – was on the verge of granting a 99-year lease to a convent. His father's offer of £5 more than the convent's offering was accepted and the family set sail for Britain. They found the house in dire straits. In essence it was a derelict grain store – following a series of wet summers, the ground floor was full of drying grain.

These were the years of austerity, with Tom's parents working to secure the house and 3,000-acre estate. Clarissa had known the house as a child – she grew up locally – but by the time she returned 30 years later, after marrying Tom, Ugbrooke was in need of care and reorganisation.

ANTICLOCKWISE FROM TOP A seventeenth-century portrait of Lady Carew by John Michael Wright hangs over the chimneypiece in the morning room, with two vouvers, which feature on the family crest, standing guard. The pared-back Adam staircase is hung with family portraits, including one that depicts the investiture of Cardinal Weld. The limestone floor of the staircase hall continues into the entrance hall, where duelling pistols and court swords are decoratively hung on the walls



ALL PICTURES In the drawing room, the frames of the eighteenth-century sofas still have their original green paintwork. Clarissa chose to replicate this shade on the fabric covering the sofas, commissioning Gainsborough Silk Weaving Co to recreate it on an archive damask design. The trimming on the matching curtains is from Turnell & Gigon and the ornate pier glass over the chimneypiece dates from 1750. The walls are covered in a silk from de Gournay





She was undeniably the perfect person to take on the Herculean task, having worked as an interior designer for the late Christopher Rowley, whose firm had restored some notable Robert Adam houses. Faced with Ugbrooke, she didn't blanch. 'To me, it wasn't daunting,' she says. 'Quite the opposite – it was a privilege.'

Listed in the Domesday Book, Ugbrooke has been home to the Cliffords since 1604. It was the 4th Lord Clifford who, in 1760, engaged Capability Brown and Robert Adam to remodel both park and house. Adam's design – an early example of his 'toy fort' style – was a square building with a central courtyard and library wing encompassing the chapel. The house still retains the original Adam rooms, but in the nineteenth century the 8th Lord, somewhat misguidedly, removed some of the Georgian windows, replacing them with heavy Victorian architraves and faux-brick rendering. Happily, the library wing remained untouched. The park, thanks to Tom's endeavours, now reflects Brown's original designs, overlooking lakes, sweeping belts of trees and views of Dartmoor.

When Clarissa arrived 20 years ago, furniture and paintings were dotted around in inappropriate places, the

With the paint of centuries scraped back, it transpired Adam had used the shade of green chosen by Clarissa

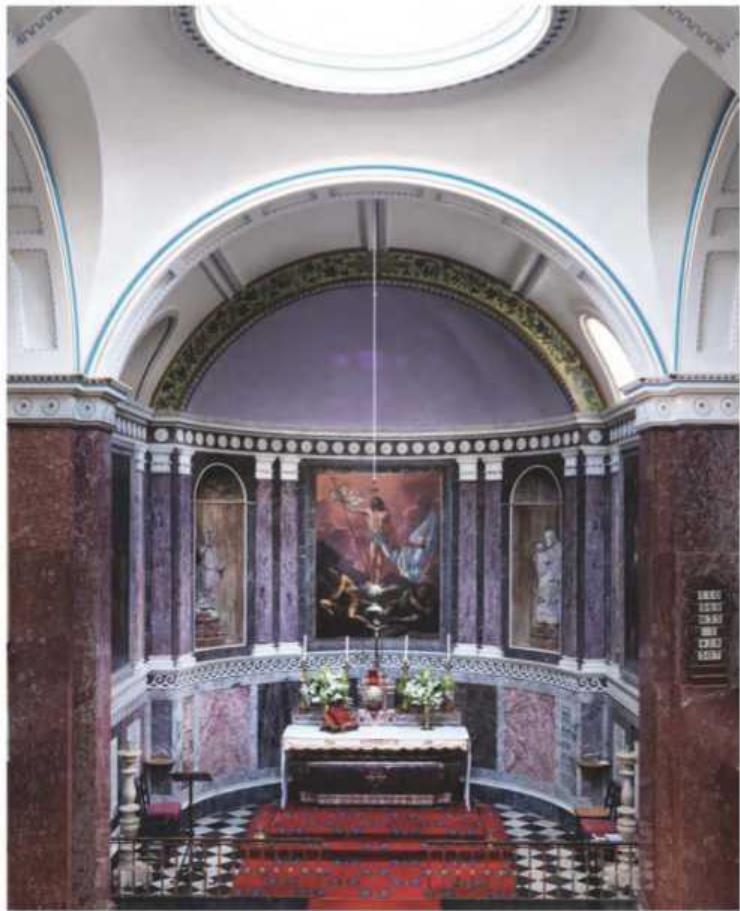
attic was full of unclaimed pieces, there was damp and little had been done to make the house a home. 'Tom was understandably apprehensive about letting an interior designer loose in the place,' says Clarissa. 'But I assured him we could revolutionise the house without spending a bean by repositioning the pictures and furniture and making order of it. The joy of Ugbrooke is that, with beautifully proportioned Adam rooms, the bones are already there.'

A few 'beans' have obviously been spent since then, but money was always a restraint and work was done in stages, with Clarissa insisting on a plan that ensured the rooms would flow harmoniously. They began by sorting through corridors and rooms, discovering treasures; they reunited a set of satinwood chairs and a set of gilt-wood chairs, now restored and in the library. They found the missing half of a pair of Gainsborough chairs in the attic, whitewashed and with its legs cut down. It now joins its partner in the Duchess of Norfolk's bedroom, so named after her exquisite eighteenth-century bed hangings were found in a makeshift cupboard.

Exploring the vast attics, they found a mixture of pieces – some excellent, such as original Adam drawings, and others 'interesting junk'. The 'junk' was sold at auction in what Clarissa calls an 'antique blitz', with the proceeds going towards the restoration of the finer pieces.

Clarissa originally decided that the many family portraits should be hung chronologically, with the early

The Adam design of the library remains untouched. The giltwood chairs to the left of the doorway have been restored and re-covered in 'Daniella Stripe' by Patrick Gallagher Tessuti, from Turnell & Gigon



FROM TOP The chapel, which is situated in the library wing, was consecrated in 1671 and now serves as the local Catholic parish church, where Mass is celebrated every Sunday. A view of the western front of the house; the grounds were designed in the eighteenth century by Capability Brown, with lawns overlooking shimmering lakes, sweeping belts of trees and beyond them views across to Dartmoor National Park

ones at the entrance and so on. For her first anniversary at Ugbrooke, however, she asked Tom whether they might re-hang some of the pictures in the drawing room. Now a stunning Lely portrait of the 1st Lord Clifford, which had previously hung over a doorway into the drawing room, is in pride of place with all the other Restoration portraits.

Her favourite portrait, an eighteenth-century painting of Lady Carew, the daughter of the 1st Lord Clifford, is now over the chimneypiece in the morning room. It had been hanging over a wood-burning stove in the hall and was covered in soot. A clean not only revealed her splendour but also that Lady Carew was, like Clarissa, devoted to her whippets. Today both their portraits with their dogs hang near each other, along with other eighteenth-century portraits. A magnificent view of Ugbrooke by Hendrik Frans de Cort, formerly squeezed into a corner of the dining room, now hangs together with Francis Towne's eighteenth-century drawings of the park, depicting the landscape created by Capability Brown.

A large table in the hall was banished, leaving clear the limestone floor, which perfectly reflects the domed ceiling. A simple staircase – due to original financial restraints – sits in the space, its walls hung with the more lugubrious Victorian ancestors, along with a painting showing the investiture of Cardinal Weld, father of the wife of the 7th Lord Clifford, who went into the church as a widower. In the room he used when he visited Ugbrooke – the Cardinal's Room – are his portrait and travelling trunk.

In the dining room, they restored the eighteenth-century gilding as much as possible and, in doing so, found a rather harsh aqua colour on the walls. Clarissa reinterpreted it using a discreet Pierre Frey damask. The library, the last room that Adam finished and possibly the best room in the house, was beset by damp and painted a rather unfortunate blue. Convinced this was wrong, Clarissa, together with Patrick Baty of Papers and Paints, devised a shade of green. With the paint of centuries scraped back, it transpired that this was exactly the colour Adam had originally chosen. The house now has 12 main bedrooms, some charming turret rooms and – thanks to all-round handymen Barry Underhill and Tony Creasey, described by Clarissa as 'the supermen of Ugbrooke' – each bedroom now has an en suite bathroom.

Ugbrooke is a centre for entertainment of family and friends and is regularly visited by decorative arts groups from America. Indeed, one of the nicest compliments Clarissa received was when she was told by a group of rather charmingly patrician Americans, who had stayed both at Blenheim and Chatsworth, that she might not have the grandest house or the greatest furniture, but she certainly has the best bathrooms.

'My stepson and his fiancée Caitlin have now taken over as it is important for each generation to bring their own enthusiasms and ideas to a place like Ugbrooke,' explains Clarissa. 'It has been wonderful living here, but it is time to step aside and enjoy life in the old stables' □

*Ugbrooke: 01626-852179; ugbrooke.co.uk
Clarissa Clifford: 07771-765980*



FROM TOP In the dining room, much of the eighteenth-century gilding on the cornicing and frieze was conserved and restored; the Pierre Frey velvet on the walls makes a striking backdrop for Ugbrooke's seventeenth-century Dutch paintings and the vases on the mantelpiece are first-edition Royal Worcester porcelain.

The walls of the Cardinal's Room are covered in 'Meredith' in red, by Nina Campbell for Osborne & Little, which is also used on the canopy and headboard

IF WALLS COULD TALK



The white walls and neutral-coloured seating in the sitting room call for bold artwork, which comes in the form of a large linocut by Christoph Ruckhäberle, to the left of the door to the kitchen, and a cryptic sculpture by Julien Brunet from Galerie Patrick Fourtin on the coffee table

Taking on a Paris apartment once decorated with extravagant frescoes, architect and designer Alireza Razavi chose to maintain the flamboyant tone, but to modernise it, resulting in rooms that are as absorbing as works of art

TEXT IAN PHILLIPS | PHOTOGRAPHS STEPHAN JULLIARD



He owner of this apartment near Parc Monceau in Paris's 8th arrondissement can still clearly recall the first time she visited. 'It was impossible to be indifferent to it,' she says. The space then belonged to the air force brigadier general Pierre-Marie Gallois, who had initially studied at the École des Beaux-Arts and was known as the father of French nuclear dissuasion. Many of the great Gallic politicians of the twentieth century visited the apartment and, on his retirement, he painted it almost entirely with frescoes. There was a red faux-marble motif in the entrance hall and Italian garden scenes in what is now the kitchen. 'Although they gave the place a lot of character, they also made it quite overwhelming and intense,' the owner says. Not enough to put her off buying the 240-square-metre property, however.

To transform it into a family home for herself, her husband and their three children, she called upon the Paris-based architect and interior designer Alireza Razavi, whom she has known since childhood. Born in Tehran, Alireza fled his homeland after the Iranian Revolution in 1979. He went on to study in Paris and Milan before starting his career in the New York offices of Peter Eisenman, and Agrest and Gandelsonas. 'I love everything Alireza does,' says the owner. 'Each of his projects is unique, and they all have great character.' For Alireza himself, their bond greatly facilitated the process. 'I knew she would trust me,' he says.

Alireza wanted to extend the general's concept for decorating the apartment's walls, but with a more contemporary feel. He also wanted at least one of the rooms to have a 'wow' effect. He and the owner agreed it should be the eat-in kitchen. Taking inspiration from the work of artists including Sol LeWitt, Frank Stella and Sarah Morris, he came up with a motif of jagged, geometric shapes in bright candy colours that pop straight off the walls. 'Everyone who comes into the kitchen, whatever their age or their social milieu, is completely absorbed by it,' says the owner. In the middle of the room, Alireza installed a dining table made from a slab of cedar wood, which he left deliberately untreated. 'That way it will still smell of cedar as it ages,' he says.

OPPOSITE CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT A pair of Sixties Danish armchairs bought at a Paris antiques fair sits on a 'Criterion' rug from Tai Ping in the sitting room. Adjoining this space is a second, more informal sitting area, where a monochrome palette is lifted by a brick red 'Strips' sofa by Cini Boeri from Arflex. The open-plan kitchen and dining room is accessed through a set of doors in the main sitting room and has an eye-catching mural designed by Alireza and painted using colours from Sikkens (also bottom left); the effect is muted by the bespoke cedar-topped table and high-gloss white units from Zecchinon Cucine

The other area with high visual voltage is the entrance hall, which Alireza devised to look slightly surreal. This time, his influences came from the films of the San Francisco-born artist Matthew Barney. 'In his work, he's created a parallel world where things look familiar, but they're not really,' he says. Similarly, Alireza wanted to come up with something in direct contrast with the style of the classical, nineteenth-century building. To that end, he created a space-like scheme with a backlit-drop ceiling made from interlocking diamond shapes and walls covered in grey and white tiles that initially appear to form perfectly regular cubes. Take a closer glance, however, and you will notice that some have been deliberately disarranged. 'I wanted to convey the idea that things are never perfect,' he explains. 'Plus, I very much like the notion of delayed experience. You see something that looks banal or mundane, but you then discover it's not what you thought it was.'

The rest of the apartment is rather more sedate. The owner specifically asked for a white carpet in both the sitting room and main bedroom, which are linked with double doors. 'I hankered after that feeling of comfort, of being able to sit down on the floor,' she says. Alireza himself wanted a calmer backdrop to display some of the owners' artwork, which includes fine line drawings by Hans Bellmer and Joseph Beuys. The carefully edited furnishings, meanwhile, bring together a pair of Sixties Danish armchairs, an Arflex daybed, a small Konstantin Grcic marble side table and one of Mies van der Rohe's iconic 'Barcelona' chairs. The opposite end of the apartment brings you to the children's rooms and guest shower room at the back.

The overall look is certainly a lot more light and airy than in Gallois' time. Yet, while his frescoes have disappeared, he has left a lasting mark on the outside of the building. On the courtyard walls, he painted a series of trompe-l'œil windows that remain today. Behind one is a bouquet of red and orange flowers, another depicts the silhouette of a man behind closed curtains. On the top floor, meanwhile, stands a scantily clad female figure, apparently based on a neighbour with loose morals. It was only after a series of complaints that Gallois eventually agreed to 'dress' her □

Studio Razavi Architecture: 00-33-142 46 02 58; studiorazavi.com





OPPOSITE CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT Double doors open onto the main bedroom in a corner of the sitting room. The en suite main bathroom has a free-standing Victoria + Albert bath and a custom-lacquered MDF and glass vanity unit; the walls are clad in streaky, textured MDF. The guest shower room has a 'Louis Ghost' chair by Philippe Starck for Kartell and honeycomb-shape tiles from Kalebodur. *Worldview Model III* by Ottmar Hörl stands at the centre of the entrance hall; to the right is a custom bike from Cyclope. THIS PAGE In the main bedroom, there are pockets of built-in shelving in Hungarian oak, with a dividing wall in the same material



In the sitting room, the neutral limed-plaster walls and oak flooring provide a blank canvas, allowing interesting pieces such as a taxidermy giraffe, bought at a Christie's auction, and vintage and contemporary photographs to stand out. The top of an old French wine table hangs over the chimneypiece, between two dark scaffolding poles, echoing the wooden beams above





a rural adventure

For photographer Joanna Vestey and her family, this farm with outbuildings in Oxfordshire was their dream house – a blank canvas that now reflects their passions for environmental issues, entertaining and travel

TEXT ALICE B-B | PHOTOGRAPHS MICHAEL SINCLAIR | LOCATIONS EDITOR LIZ ELLIOT





W W

hen house hunting, the chance of finding the perfect aesthetic fit can be about a million to one. But when the photographer Joanna Vestey and her husband Steve Brooks, a new technologies investor and explorer, decided

to move out of London four years ago, they hit the jackpot with this converted farm and outbuildings situated in Oxfordshire's Windrush Valley.

The previous owners, Georgie and Mark Rowse, have a track record for renovating interesting properties. 'We were incredibly lucky,' explains Jo. 'They have an eye for magical places and an ability to renovate them in a way that enhances them. They'd done this place beautifully, with chimney-pieces sourced from Belgium and doors found in France – and even Michael Caine's old loo bought at auction,' she says, laughing as she points out the mahogany thunderbox. 'The house was a beautiful blank canvas to which we've been able to add our own mark as the new custodians.'

With a perfect set of bones already in place – limed walls, oak floors, marble basins – Jo and Steve addressed various factors to make this secluded cluster of higgledy piggledy barns and courtyard gardens work as a base for them and their children – Jago, 12, and Chloe, nine – along with their fluffy, black, working cocker spaniel, Luke.

The eco-sensitive couple immediately installed a ground-source heating system in the garden and had heat-conserving and art-protecting UV film stuck on the huge barn windows, which look out onto an Italianate courtyard garden filled with wildflowers. And – in what must be a Cotswolds first – they removed the Aga from the kitchen, replacing it with a regular range cooker. 'I didn't want something pumping heat out night and day while we were beginning to look at eco heating systems,' explains Jo.

They filled the house with a mix of old and new furniture and accessories: mid-century design icons; lights from Valerie Wade; a massive clock from a town square in Paris; the top of an old French wine table that hangs above the sitting room chimney-piece instead of a mirror. There are loose-covered sofas, comfortable armchairs and linen curtains in the same sandy colour as the walls, set into the window recesses. 'You don't notice the curtains,' says Jo. 'I think that's how it should be, rather than having big, pouffey ones.'

Hanging on the walls alongside Jo's own work is a very impressive collection of photographs that have been accrued by the couple over the past 20 years. 'We have quite a few big ones and it can be hard finding the wall space to hang them in many houses,' says Jo. 'So having a barn conversion is brilliant.' The limed-plaster and painted walls throughout



OPPOSITE The dining room has a stone chimney-piece sourced in Belgium and is decorated simply, with Hans J Wegner's 'Wishbone' chairs from Skandium around the oak table. THIS PAGE FROM ABOVE The pretty exterior of the farmhouse. In the kitchen, a stool from Alfie's Antique Market contrasts with the white units





the house are covered with an eclectic mix of vintage and contemporary images.

Reflecting the family's love of travel and adventure are a hundred-year-old taxidermy giraffe bought from Christie's, which stands apparently gently grazing in the sitting room, and a patchwork armchair from Bokja in Beirut. Linking the hall to the dining room is an aviation-themed wall – a nod to Steve's skills as a helicopter pilot – with black and white photographs by Shomei Tomatsu and Norman Parkinson. Among other trips, the intrepid duo spent their honeymoon flying from Alaska to Chile, before Jo returned to London, pregnant with their son. Meanwhile Steve continued to fly, but crashed 35 miles off the coast of Antarctica when his chopper's engine failed. 'Oh yes, the crash into the sea,' says Jo, merrily. 'It's funny that when something serious happens, you go into "just deal with it" mode. There isn't time to panic.'

'This is where we all sit,' she says, walking across the limestone floor in the kitchen. 'It doesn't matter how much space you've got, we all end up on top of each other – like puppies in a basket.' Beyond and into Jo's office, which has space for the children to do homework, she pounces upon a brown paper parcel and unwraps it with urgency. 'It's my new book,' she says proudly of the hardback photography book entitled *Custodians*. 'It's about permanent buildings in Oxford and the more transient individuals within, and whether one dwarfs the other.' She spends a chunk of each week living in Oxford, where her children are at school, and one day a week at the University of South Wales in Newport, taking an MA in photography. 'This is actually my fifth book, but to me it feels like my first proper book – tipping into being more of an artist than a working photographer.'

Walking through the wildflower garden, Jo opens the door to a dovecote that has recently been transformed into her studio: a monastic white space with a simple white desk and one light. It is on this and various other outbuildings that the duo have made their very own imprint. A lean-to is now an open-air dining room with a fire and grill at one end, a homage to the couple's time spent in Uruguay. 'Even when it's pouring with rain in the winter, we have lunches out here,' says Jo. The next barn along is a games room for the children, with table football and noisy drum kits kept well out of ear-shot. A further barn has been converted to house Steve's workspace, which, she explains, is currently out of bounds: 'He has a bunch of people from Slovakia working here at the moment, trying to find a breakthrough in free energy. We quite often have people to stay. I wanted a space that was home, but was inspirational as a gallery and for workshops like Steve's energy projects.'

However, it was the size of a dilapidated cowshed that proved most fortuitous in a long line of luck for Jo and Steve. 'We wanted somewhere with a pool, and when we first visited the house and saw this derelict barn, we both noticed that it was long enough to swim a lap,' says Jo, pushing a button to remove the swimming-pool cover. 'It's completely heavenly and we swim nearly every day. Even the grandparents get in on Christmas Day.' They really have won the property lottery □

Joanna Vestey's latest book 'Custodians' is published by Ashmolean Museum Publications, £25



OPPOSITE Stairs lead from the dressing room down into the main bedroom, which has Jo's photographs on display and a Japanese light on the desk. THIS PAGE FROM ABOVE The main bathroom has a bath with floor-standing taps, which was found in France. A once-dilapidated cowshed now houses a 17-metre-long pool



The sitting room, at the front of the flat, illustrates how the designers have fulfilled a 'comfortable but without clutter' brief, with inviting sofas surrounding the 'Jean Marc' coffee table by Julian Chichester, and plenty of discreet storage. Detail is provided by pieces including a Seventies brass sculpture from Fiona McDonald, which sits to the far right of the windows, and cushions from Violet & George





Space creators

Designers Nicholas Spencer and Sophie von Wedekind had carte blanche to restructure and decorate this west London flat, using ingenious storage solutions and detailed accents to enhance the feeling of light and space

TEXT DAVID NICHOLLS | PHOTOGRAPHS SARAH HOGAN



THIS PAGE FROM LEFT Glazed pocket doors separate the sitting room from the open-plan kitchen and dining room while letting light into both rooms throughout the day; the wall between the two rooms was extended to house storage above the doors (right). OPPOSITE Translucent orange 'La Marie' chairs by Philippe Starck for Kartell add a splash of colour to the mostly white kitchen, which includes Michael Anastassiades' 'Angle Pendant' ceiling light. The cooker is concealed within the tall cabinet on the left

As Nicholas Spencer takes me on a tour of a project he has recently completed in Holland Park, I marvel at how a highly skilled interior designer can bequeath a Tardis-like quality upon an interior that, on first impression, has just a modest amount of space. Three bedrooms, two of which have en suite bathrooms, a large kitchen and dining room, and a sitting room with enough space for a family of five all on the top floor of a house? Surely the laws of physics have been broken.

The flat is at the top of a substantial Regency house in a part of Holland Park where some of its unconverted counterparts are home to minor embassies and consulates. At 140 square metres, it is hardly a shoebox. That said, Nicholas and his wife Sophie, who make up the interior architecture practice Spencer & Wedekind, have created an interior that is far more than the sum of its square metres.

It was a project that required an imaginative approach to problems, the confidence to try something new and a handful of tricks that deceive the eye in the most pleasing of ways. However, Nicholas soon learnt it was also a project that required the patience of a saint. 'When we started stripping it all back, we'd see a little bit of mildew here or there, some yellowing on the walls or wallpaper starting to peel off, so we knew there was something wrong.'

What no one suspected was that the entire roof would need replacing with one that would require

reinforcing from below, and that the ceiling would also need to be removed and replaced – with faithfully reproduced cornicing, due to the building's Grade-II-listed status. Interior work was put on hold for seven months. 'What was meant to be a project with some restructuring of the layout and decoration turned into a major build,' Nicholas recalls.

Good fortune came by way of the clients, who sound like an interior designer's dream come true. Both work in the music business, with jobs that require a relentless international travel schedule. It meant that they had little time to um and ah over decisions and could let Nicholas continue to drive the project forward. Although not extravagant, the budget was enough to allow the appropriate attention to detail. The owners' familiarity with some of Nicholas's previous projects also meant they gave him virtual carte blanche to fulfil a minimal brief.

Today, the flat is a perfectly ordered space, with a small hall at the entrance dividing the bedrooms from the living areas, which include the east-facing sitting room at the front and the kitchen and dining area at the back. Dividing these two spaces is a set of glazed pocket doors, which allows natural light to always fill the middle of the rather deep building. Cleverly, the doors have been positioned to hide the working area of the kitchen, saving the owners from staring at pots to be washed while they relax in the sitting room. The wall between the two rooms has been deepened around the doors to make space for storage, which also creates the effect of a mini-hall.





Storage, in fact, is one of the underlying features of this flat. One point that came out of the brief was the owners' aversion to clutter, which led to the siting of the oven within the white, streamlined kitchen units. In the sitting room, a hip-height wall of built-in cupboards, punctuated by upholstered nooks on which to perch under the windows, contains a drinks cabinet, a hinged unit that transforms into a laptop-size desk and additional storage. Their modest height, and the white walls that are largely unburdened by artwork, prevent a room with relatively low ceilings from feeling too closed in. Perhaps because of the generous amount of joinery – both evident and discreet – the flat has a handsome quality.

The main bedroom, with its en suite bathroom, is one of Nicholas's great triumphs in terms of use of space. A half wall was built to create a dressing area between the two spaces. The bed is positioned on one side of this division, facing the window, meaning the owners can lie in bed and watch the sun set. The half wall incorporates additional cupboards and drawers, while the top is glazed – a repetition of the designer's tactic for maximising light coming into the flat.

It is in this bedroom that Nicholas points out some of the finer points and decorative accents that recur throughout the flat. The smoked oak floorboards are laid in an oversize herringbone pattern, except for in the hall, where a smaller basket-weave formation makes the space feel larger than it is. Here and there, but certainly not everywhere, thin strips of bronze beading have been incorporated into sections of the flooring. Aspects like this delight the eye once noticed, but hardly scream for attention.

The ironmongery is among the most notable decorative features. Antiqued brass and burnished bronze are the main ingredients, wrought into delicate swan-neck wall lights in the sitting room, or playful animal-shape cupboard handles in the bedroom of the couple's five-year-old twins. Even the all-white radiators are bejewelled with brass fittings that express the patina of age.

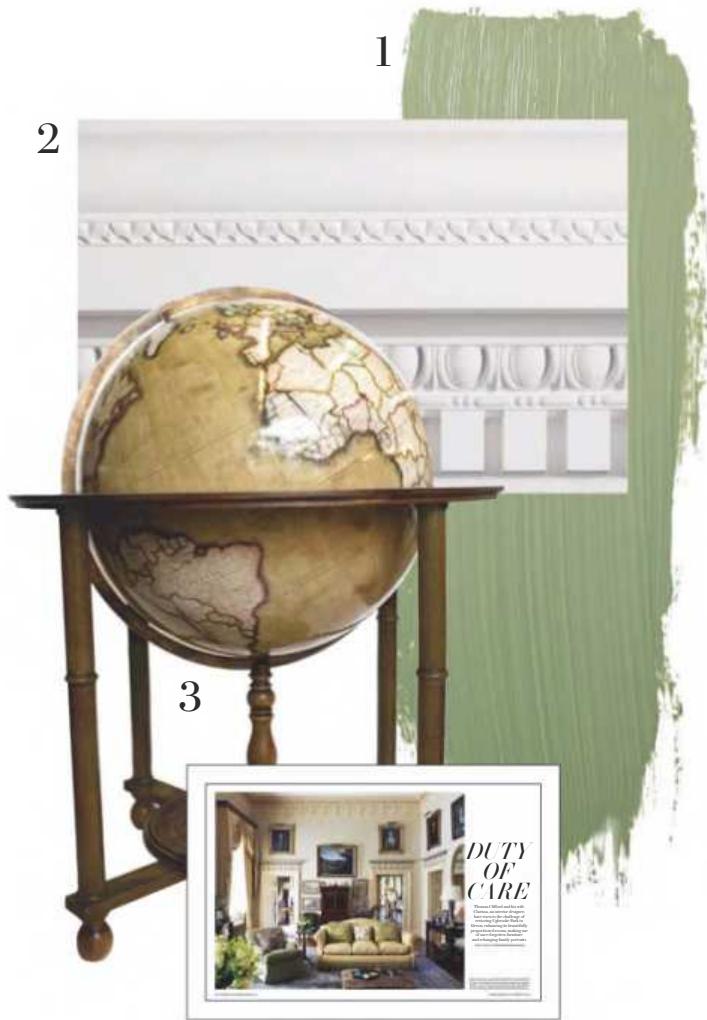
On the day of my visit, one of the owners had just arrived from a transatlantic flight and her pleasure at being home was palpable. As I took one last look around and my eye hit upon a group of silk butterflies on a wall covered in Fromental silk wallpaper, perfectly positioned as though fluttering around a wall light, I could hardly say I blamed her □

Spencer & Wedekind: spencerandwedekind.com

THIS PAGE FROM TOP The oak floorboards in the hall are laid in a smaller pattern to that in the adjoining rooms to increase the feeling of space. Built-in wardrobes and banquette seating with storage in the main bedroom. OPPOSITE CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT The main bedroom has Fromental wallpaper and a coloured glass pendant light from Rothschild & Bickers. A half wall behind the bed is backed by built-in drawers. The encaustic floor tiles in the bathroom were sourced in Portugal and the bath is from The Water Monopoly. Around the corner, a pair of mirrors creates symmetry above the basin



The KNOWLEDGE



DUTY OF CARE Pages 88–95

1 PAINT

In the library of Ugbrooke Park in Devon, the walls are painted a wonderful apple green – 'SC203' from the Traditional Colours range at Papers and Paints. It is made from six different pigments and matched to an early-nineteenth-century source. It costs £37.50 for 2.5 litres of emulsion. 020-7352 8626; papers-paints.co.uk

2 PLASTERWORK

Many of the original Robert Adam cornices have remained intact at Ugbrooke. An invaluable source for similar designs is Stevensons of Norwich. As well as offering six pre-designed ranges, it has a bespoke service. Shown here is the 'Adam Egg & Dart with Dentil'; a 3-metre length costs £50.40. 01603-400824; stevensons-of-norwich.co.uk

3 GLOBE

An antique globe is given pride of place in the library. Bellerby & Co Globemakers produces a large range of hand-crafted globes, including the 'Cassini Edition', painted with watercolour washes, which sits in an oak and cherry base. This measures 135 x 120cm diameter and costs £13,950. 020-8800 7235; bellerbyandco.com



IF WALLS COULD TALK Pages 96–101

1 PAINTING

A large 2006 linocut by Christoph Ruckhäberle hangs on the wall in the sitting room of this Paris apartment. The Leipzig-based artist is also well known for his vivid paintings. Shown here is his *Untitled 2014*, which depicts a woman reclining. It measures 130 x 190cm and costs €20,000 from Campoli Presti gallery. 020-7739 4632; campolipresti.com

2 CHAIR

Six modern editions of Harry Bertoia's iconic 'Side Chair' from 1952 create a contrast with the cedar-topped table in the kitchen. The chair, shown here in chrome with a red seat pad, is still produced by Knoll today. It measures 73 x 54 x 58cm and is available with a seat pad or fully upholstered. This version costs £768 from Skandium. 020-7935 2077; skandium.com

3 SIDE TABLE

In the sitting room, the sculptural form of the 'Taksim' side table by Konstantin Grcic for Marsotto Edizioni complements the owner's bold art collection. Designer Alireza Razavi chose this white Carrara marble model. It measures 45 x 64 x 48cm and costs £5,634, from Twentytwentyone. 020-7288 1996; twentytwentyone.com

Inspired by the houses in this issue, ELIZABETH METCALFE gives directions on how to achieve similar style



A RURAL ADVENTURE Pages 102–107

1 BASKET

Beside the chimneypiece in Joanna Vestey's Oxfordshire sitting room, a basket sits against the lime-plastered walls. For something similar, try The Somerset Willow Company. Seen here is the 'Round Log Basket with Woven Handles'; this medium size measures 45 x 48cm diameter and costs £76. 01278-424003; somersetwillow.co.uk

2 CUSHIONS

Velvet cushions in muted tones are arranged on the white 'Stephanie' sofa by Am Designs. Kirsten Heckermann makes similar cushion covers in hand-dyed cotton velvet. They come in three sizes or can be made to order. Shown here (from front) are 'Marmaduke', £64, 'Pink Fandango', £68, and 'Miss Charley', £72. 07887-680672; kirsten heckermann.com

3 CABINET

The patterned cabinet in the sitting room is the 'Lulu' by Knowles & Christou. With its Japanese motif of branches and blossom - known as *ikebana* - and brass plates and hinges, it adds sophistication to the neutral scheme. It is seen here in dark walnut, measures 155 x 91 x 51cm and costs £4,240. 020-7352 7000; knowles-christou.co.uk



A RURAL ADVENTURE Pages 102–107

1 CABINET

Designers Nicholas Spencer and Sophie von Wedekind have placed a 'Server with Six Drawers' cabinet by Chelsea Textiles in the hall of this west London flat. Its shallow depth makes it ideal for narrow spaces. Shown here with a vintage lacquer finish in the midnight colourway, it measures 84 x 113 x 38cm and costs £1,757. 020-7584 5544; chelseatextiles.com

2 WALL LIGHT

Three 'Swan Arm Empire' wall lights by Besselink & Jones, with bespoke lampshades, line one wall of the sitting room. Besselink & Jones offers an extensive selection of wall lights and the intricately detailed design is shown here in brass. It measures 25 x 11 x 18cm and costs £395. 020-7351 4669; besselink.com

3 FABRIC

The armchair nestled in the corner of the sitting room is covered in 'Etienne' by Lewis & Wood. It is based on a nineteenth-century French design and is available in six colours. The moonstone colourway used in this room - and also shown here - ties in well with the sofas. It costs £84 a metre. 020-7751 4554; lewismwood.co.uk □

PHOTOGRAPHS
RACHEL WHITING

moody blue magic

GABBY DEEMING combines midnight blue with metallic details and whimsical paper decorations to create elegant rooms for Christmas

THIS PAGE Mid-century metal **safe box**, £120, from Puckhaber. Five-pointed **tin stars**, £14 for three, from Toast. **OPPOSITE WALL Mirror**, for similar, 'Chichester' (old chalk), 124 x 82cm, £270, from Neptune. **FURNITURE** Acacia **dining table**, 'Baudelaire', 81x284x99cm, £2,750, from Oka. Nineteenth-century French **bench**, 51x 267 x 29cm, £980, from Puckhaber; covered in 'Fela Ticking Stripe,' by Adam Bray, flax and cotton, £76.80 a metre, from Tissus d'Hélène. **ACCESSORIES** **Hanging birds**, cut from watercolour paper, £2.35 for an A2 sheet, from Paperchase. **Paper stars**, '11-3009E-1', €14.20 a pack of four, from Livingly. **Tablecloth**, 'Large Spot' (ivory), by MYB Textiles, cotton voile, £48.22 a metre, from Tissus d'Hélène. Linen **napkins**, £16 each, from Volga Linen. Glass **bottle shades**, £4.50 each,

from RE. Silver-plated **plate domes**, £70 each, from Hilary Batstone. Dinner **plates**, 'Bowsley', £78 for six; stainless-steel **cutlery**, 'Stuart', £275 for a 36-piece set; both from Neptune. **'Marbled Enamel Dishes'** (navy), £7.50 each, from Labour & Wait. Christmas **crackers**, £35 for six, from Toast. Foliage **garland**, from £82.50 a metre, from Achillea Flowers. Faux **Christmas tree** (with added foliage), 'Albert', £355 for 2.5-metre, from Neptune. Connectable **fairy lights** (warm white), £12.99 for a 10-metre string, from Lights4Fun. Hand-carved and gilded wooden **animal decorations**, £7.50 each, from Rococo Chocolates. Paper snowflake **tree topper**, '07-2425-1', £12.70 for two, from Livingly. **Wrapping paper** (gold, silver and brown kraft), £2.50 a 3-metre roll, from Paperchase







OPPOSITE WALL Wallpaper, 'Drag' (bespoke blue), £1,200 for 20 x 10-metre rolls (minimum order), from Farrow & Ball. **Pressed Metal Floral Wall Sconces** (grey), £43 each, from RE. **Candles**, £1 for three, from Tiger. **FURNITURE** Wing chairs, 'Compton', 133 x 76 x 77cm, £1,765 each, from Oka; covered in 'Sultans Garden' (sage), by Martyn Lawrence Bullard, linen, £242 a metre, from Tissus d'Hélène. **ACCESSORIES** Silk cushion, 'Vintage Blue Check Square', £40, from Pillo. **Wrapping paper** (gold, silver and brown kraft), £2.50 a 3-metre roll; grosgrain **ribbon**, from £1.99 a 3-metre roll; from Paperchase. **Gold dots**

cut from foil card, £3 for an A3 sheet, from Paperchase; using 'XCut Large Palm Punch Circle', £6, from Hobbycraft. Faux **Christmas tree** (with added foliage), 'Albert', £355 for 2.5-metre, from Neptune. Connectable **fairy lights** (warm white), £12.99 for a 10-metre string, from Lights4Fun. **THIS PAGE** Forties glazed Fulham Pottery **vases**, by Constance Spry, £2,450 for a set of nine, from Quindry. Floating plinth **shelves**, £11.95 each, from The Good Shelf Company. Foliage **garlands**, from £82.50 a metre, from Achillea Flowers. Poppy seed-head **garlands**, threaded and sprayed with gold paint by *House & Garden*



THIS PAGE WALLS Wallpaper, 'Beauvallon' (bespoke colourway), by Rapture & Wright, 68.5cm wide, £22 a metre, from Redloh House Fabrics. **FURNITURE** Console table covered in 'Samode' (indigo on oyster), by Lisa Fine Textiles, linen, £260 a metre, from Tissus d'Hélène. Bleached oak **armchair**, 103 x 70 x 60cm, £3,900 for a pair, from Hilary Batstone. **ACCESSORIES** Paper **streamers**, £8.50 for 3 x 4-metre lengths; hanging **paper decorations**, from £15 each; metallic **fans**, £9 for three; all from Talking Tables. Distressed tin **candle holders**, £5.95 for two, from The Original Pop Up Shop. **Candles**, £1 for three, from Tiger. Foliage **garland**, from £82.50 a metre, from Achillea Flowers. **Wrapping paper** (gold, silver and brown kraft), £2.50 a 3-metre roll; grosgrain **ribbon**, from £1.99 a 3-metre roll; **mice silhouettes** (on stairs) cut from paper (navy), £2 a sheet; all from Paperchase. **Confetti** (white), from cannons with 5-metre reach, £7.99 each, from Confetti Master.

OPPOSITE FURNITURE Hand-painted mahogany four-poster **bed**, 'Reeded', 230 x 180 x 200cm, £5,500, from Simon Horn. Copper **picnic tables**, £1,150 each, from Hilary Batstone. **ACCESSORIES** Star **mobiles**, '11-3009-8', 41 x 32cm diameter, €24.70 each, from Livingly. **Present sack**, 'Letitia' (bleu anglais), by Nicole Fabre Designs, linen, £100 a metre, from Tissus d'Hélène. Foliage **garland**, as before. **Throw**, 'Mimosa' (delft), by Carolina Irving Textiles, linen, £152 a metre, from Redloh House Fabrics. **Bedlinen**, 'Check' (prussian blue), from £45 for a pillowcase; 'CrushedLinen Fitted Bottom Sheet', from £90; both from Volga Linen. Silk **cushions**, 'Yellow and Black Check', £40 each; and 'Blue and Yellow Check', £35 each; all from Pillo. Brass and glass **carafe**, £29, and **tumbler**, £15, both from Rockett St George. **Wrapping paper**, **ribbon**, **candle holders** and **candles**, all as before. For suppliers' details, see Stockists page □





(left) ROBERT KIME
Pictures of both his
decorating projects
and his own houses are
included in the new book



(below) ROYAL
TERRACE The main
bedroom of a house in
Edinburgh decorated by
Robert. The bathroom

(opposite) SOUTH
WRAXALL MANOR
The grand drawing room
of this house in Wiltshire
has a Gainsborough
portrait of King George III
and a large tapestry

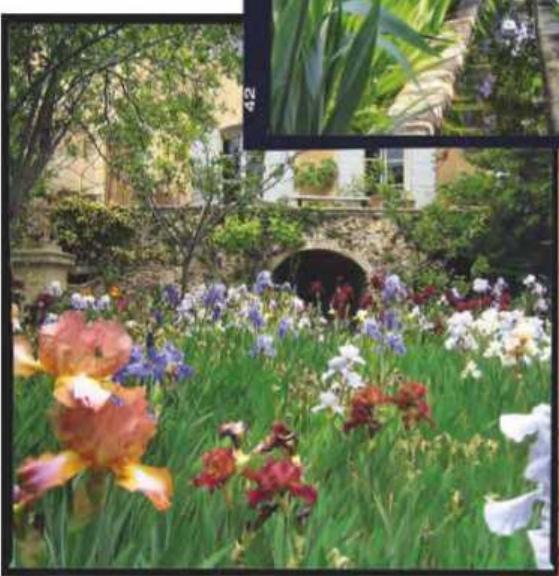
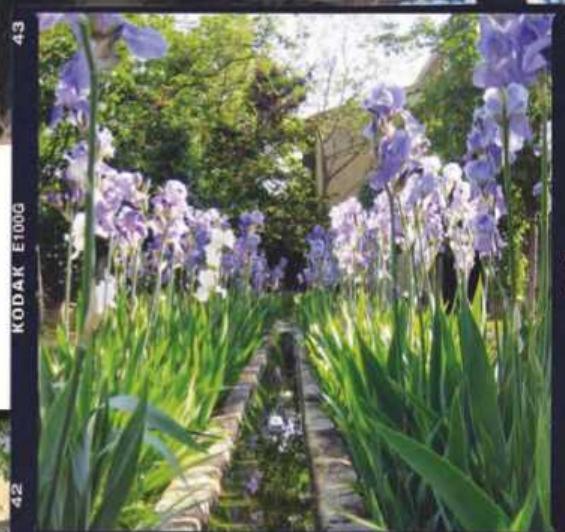
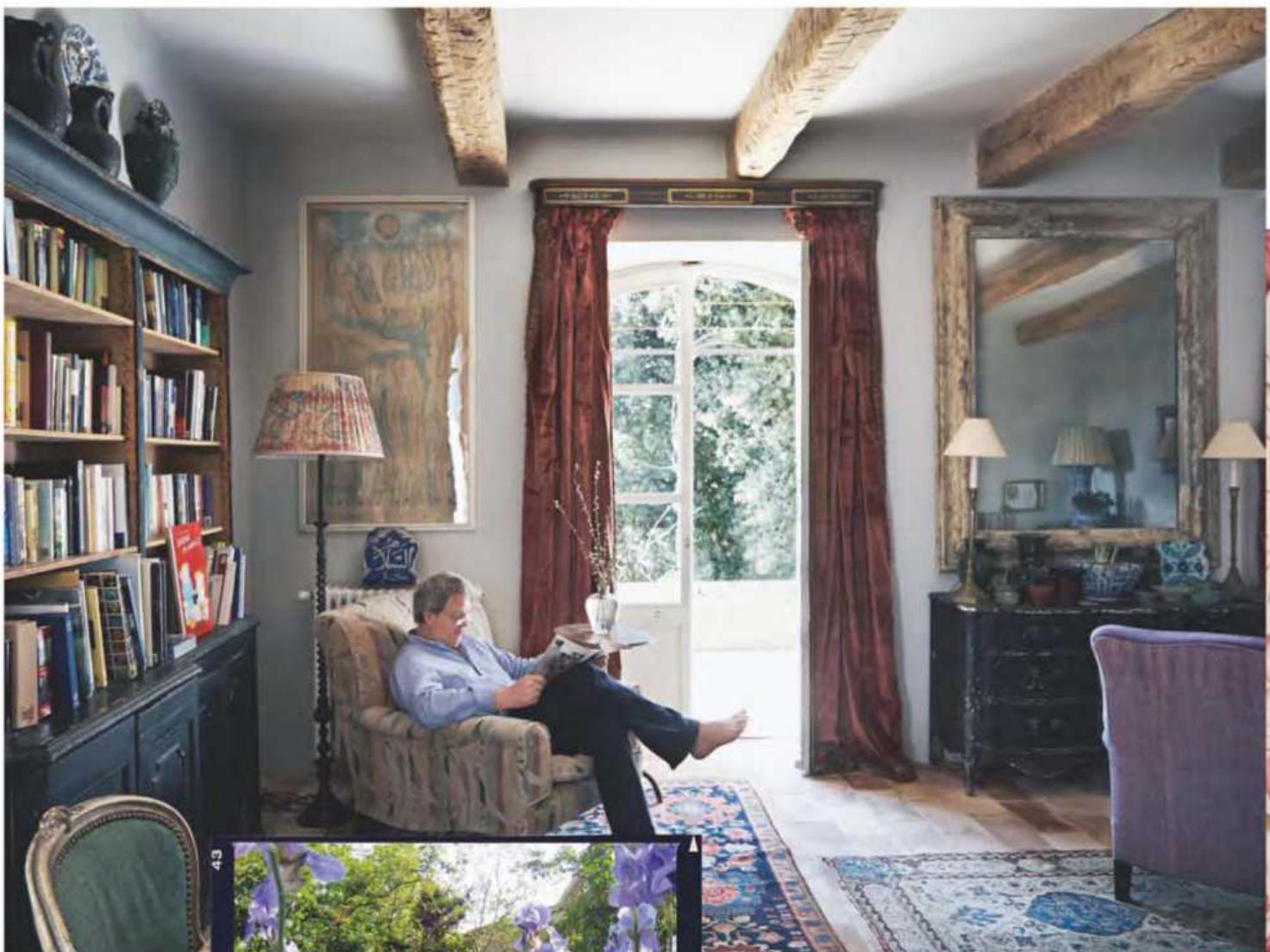


Robert's REALM

To mark the publication of a new book on Robert Kime's work as a decorator, fellow antiques dealer and tastemaker Christopher Gibbs muses on the essence of Robert's interiors and his unique contribution to English decoration

PHOTOGRAPHS TESSA TRAEGER



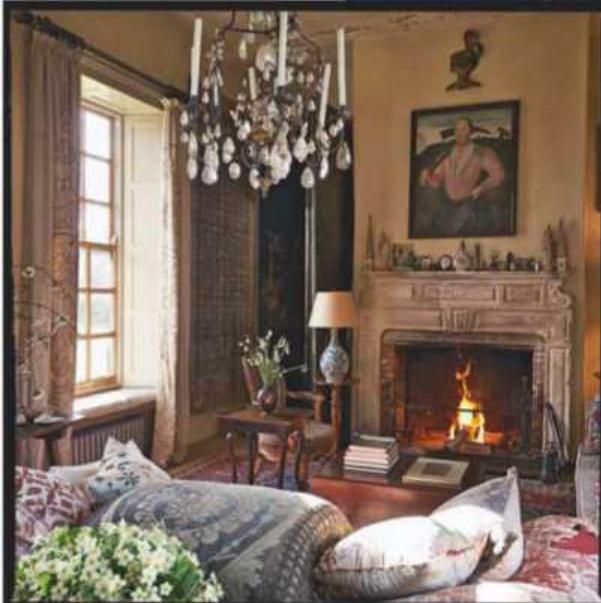


(opposite clockwise from top) LA GONETTE

Robert in the library of his house in France. His late wife Helen sits at the marble-topped kitchen table; new beams were put in throughout the house. The lime-washed south façade. Robert installed a *chemin d'eau*, an irrigation channel, lined with irises

(this page from top)

UPPER FARM
An Iznik jug holds a bunch of *Tulipa sylvestris* from the garden of his Wiltshire house. Robert created the sitting room out of the jumble of seventeenth-century rooms (also bottom)



The sales of great country houses were always a meeting place, both of us racing around and often marking the same handful of enviable objects

Books about the work of interior decorators are legion. Some are tedious displays of the sameness that marks the luxurious quarters of the suddenly rich, recipes for comfort, of bland elegance, garnished with new art provided by art advisers, easily recognised and appraised by art-market followers. This new book about Robert Kime's work shows another world, a continuum of thoughtful elegance, beauty and ease that mirrors a man who combines deep and wide-ranging knowledge and understanding of the constants that define the art of living beautifully. He talks about 'safe houses', homes that echo the nature and enthusiasms of their owners, and are fused to the garden and wider landscape. Robert's work spans 45 years, but he is very much of our time, with an understanding of how to make the bones of the past live and inspire anew. 'I am an assembler,' he says.

I first came to Robert many years ago to see his wares. He and his equally gifted wife Helen, an author of children's books who died in 2012 and to whom the book is dedicated, were living and dealing in antiques from a gothic schoolhouse at Mildenhall, or 'Mynll' in Wiltshire-speak. I was immediately seduced by the quality, the diversity and the idiosyncratic poetry of what was on offer.

Over long years, we bought and sold together. The sales of great country houses were always a meeting place, both of us racing around and often marking the same handful of enviable





The beautiful and surprising always lurk in the Kime labyrinth: the rare, the charming, battered beauties, all ingredients that make rooms dance and smile

objects. Robert is perhaps fractionally more acquisitive than me. 'I think that has to be a keepie,' he would say firmly, as he tumbled a cascade of Regency chintzes or revealed a fragment of antiquity in the stable yard unremarked by the cataloguer. Like an older master, the hard-to-forget Geoffrey Bennison, Robert came to decorating from dealing. 'I want a home like yours,' the good client would plead.

Half of the dozen houses in the book are Robert's own, but there is also the splendid 2003 transformation of Clarence House for the Prince of Wales, who provides a warm tribute in the opening pages. There is the refreshment of the Duke of Beaufort's Swangrove, the West Indian Paradise Island for Mrs Gilbert Lloyd, and the rich and wondrous resurrection of South Wraxall Manor for John and Gela Taylor (this in concert with Patrick Kinmonth, whose wife Tessa Traeger has taken many of the beautiful photographs in the book).

With a growing family and a flourishing business, the Kimes moved, first to a long, low house west of Marlborough, where sarsens litter the landscape. The hub of Robert's own homes is always the kitchen; he is a good cook – as was Helen – and their son Tom is now a noted chef. Good cooking is assisted by good gardening and equal attention given to the perfect ordering of life outside. In Robert's hands, the productive garden, also home to rare and fragrant plant treasures, is woven in to the wider landscape and – like the rooms inside – is strewn with treasures culled over decades, touchstones and talismen, which contribute to the happy feeling of continuity and ageless and gentle harmony.

Later, when the antiques business burgeoned and calls came to transform the houses of friends and clients, they moved east to Fosbury in Wiltshire, to Upper Farm, set on a windy down up a steep and ancient track, remote and amply supplied with barns and outbuildings. These were soon filled with the fruits of Robert's forays to sales and on jaunts into the Maghreb and the Levant.

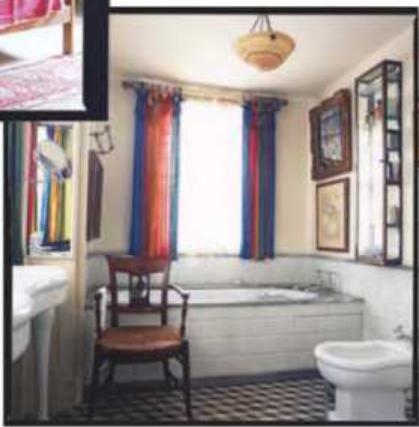
The beautiful and surprising always lurk in the Kime labyrinth: the rare, the charming, battered beauties, all ingredients that might make rooms dance and smile. Textiles, often copied from antique fragments and documents and made anew in Anatolian villages, or by the handful of English craftsmen able to work to Robert's standards, and a team of



(top left) MUSEUM STREET Suzanis made in Uzbekistan sold in the shop

(above) CLARENCE HOUSE Decorated by Robert for the Prince of Wales, the Garden Room has a sofa covered in antique fabric; the piano was often used by Noël Coward when he visited the Queen Mother

(left) SWANGROVE The drawing room of the Duke of Beaufort's 'hunting lodge'



(from top) MUSEUM STREET In Robert's flat above his shop, the library is hung with five roundels of fruit and birds purchased in Italy. The spare room has a sofa bed covered in an old kilim. Robert's bathroom has pictures above the bath and striped Turkish curtains. Robert outside the shop



JOSHUA MONAGHAN (MUSEUM STREET PORTRAITS)

well-tutored acolytes, made possible a flow of unfamiliar, always lovely materials, destined for a London market.

So what is the spring of this ceaseless creativity? All flows from a deep knowledge of architecture, the decorative arts and the natural world, but also from a subtle sense of place – the *genius loci*, as our forefathers called it. A house must be made fit for life today, for the family that lives there. It must breathe afresh. Light must be caught and brought within. Floors must be strewn with oriental carpets and rugs, chosen with unerring skill, and include indoor gardens. Outside, the true garden must be joined to the house and wider landscape, and seem, by careful planting, to have been there forever. Treasures from outside must come in, like the drooping yellow *Tulipa sylvestris* in an Iznik jug. The photographs in this book, and its author Alastair Langlands' perceptive and informative account, tell something of the story and of the sharp and tender eye and the deep knowledge that permeates the work.

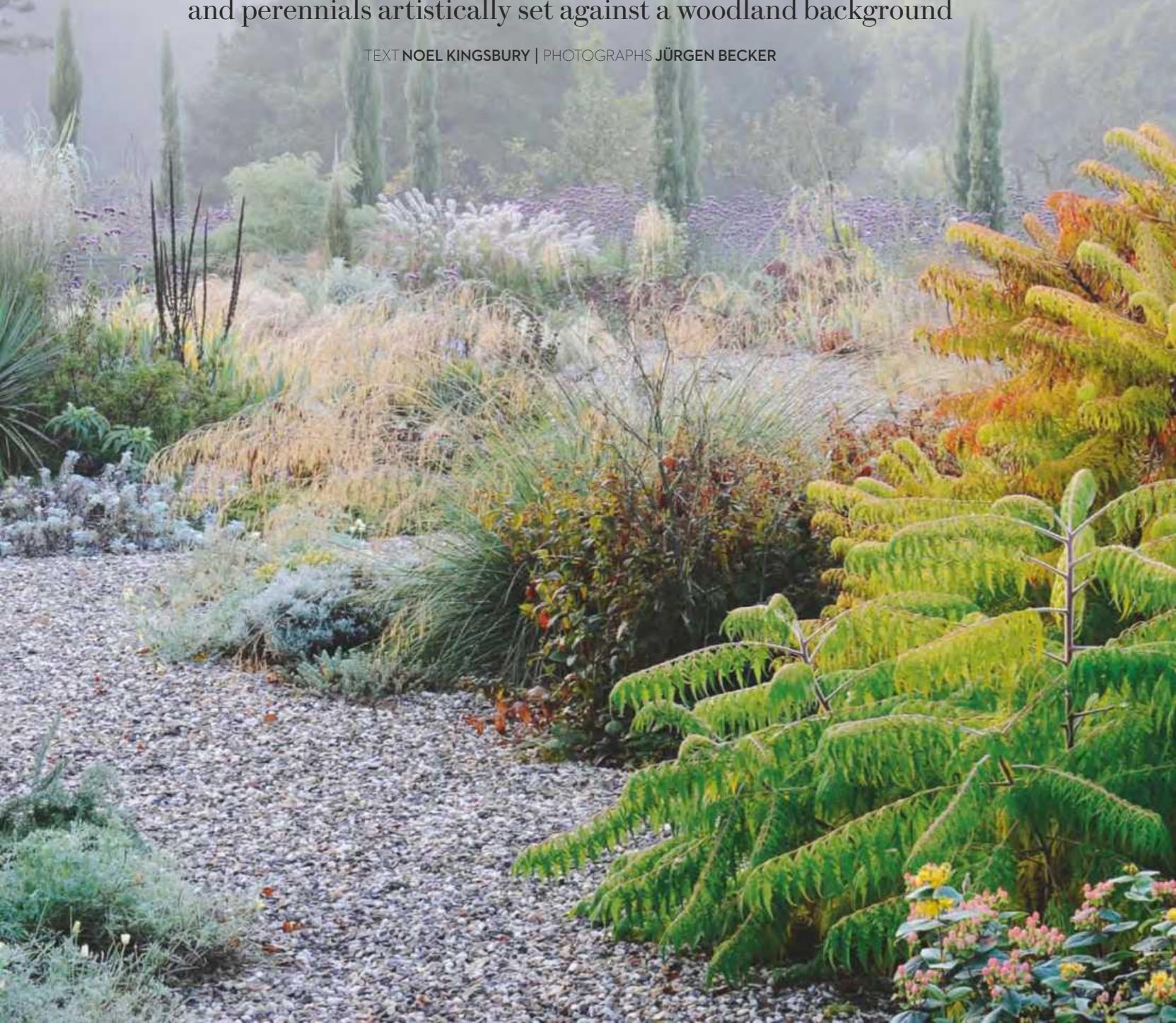
Finally, look carefully at the pages dedicated to his flat above the Museum Street shop, current culmination of a lifetime's creativity, below the Hawksmoor steeple, which apes the pyramid of Halicarnassus. A dazzling distillation of his lifetime as a collector; pared, pruned, sprinkled with treasures we've seen over the years, spilling over with books, fragrant with wafting flowers from his terrace, modest, welcoming, generous. This is a book from which the art of living can be learned. It is indispensable □

'Robert Kime' by Alastair Langlands is published by Frances Lincoln, £40 | robertkime.com

Planting on the edge

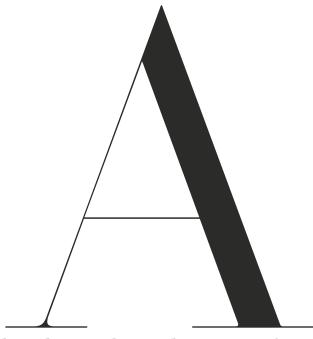
German garden designer Peter Janke has indulged his passion for plants at his house near Düsseldorf, with grasses and perennials artistically set against a woodland background

TEXT NOEL KINGSBURY | PHOTOGRAPHS JÜRGEN BECKER



The 14,000-square-metre garden is densely planted with a wide range of species; prominent here is the autumn foliage of *Rhus typhina* 'Dissecta' and the ornamental grass *Miscanthus sinensis* 'Goliath'. Italian cypresses provide a contrast to the predominantly naturalistic feel of the planting





line of Italian cypress trees stakes out a formal entrance along the drive to Peter Janke's house, as well as creating a strong sense of rhythm in what is a softly informal garden. It is also a statement about Peter's planting philosophy. He may be a plantsman and collector – the garden has over 4,000 species, he tells me –

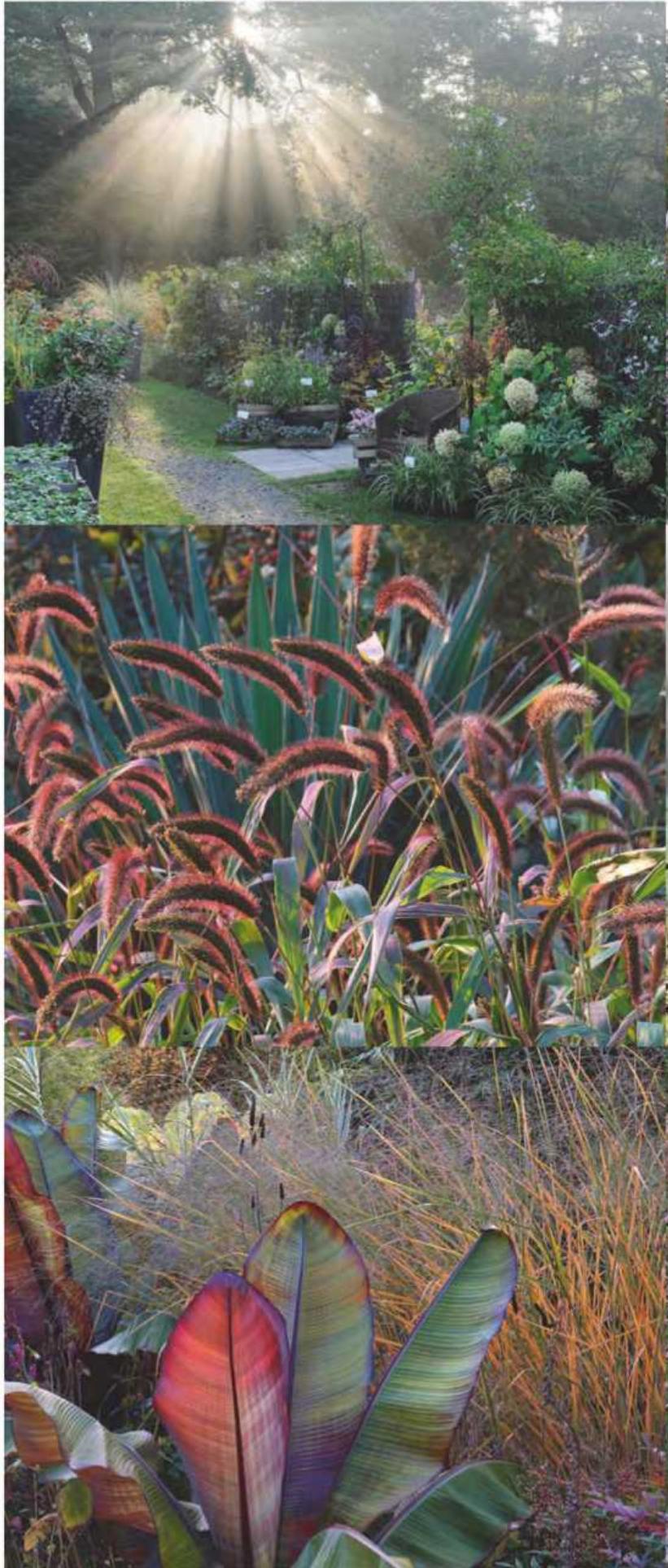
but he is also a designer, for whom plants have a clear artistic role. Just on the northern edge of their viability as garden plants – further north they grow loose and then get pulled apart by snow – the cypresses are central to his vision for this garden and, he says, 'nothing else would do'.

Peter has a reputation as a rising star in the world of German garden design. 'He is one of the few who has a real knowledge and passion for plants, as well as being a good designer,' says Ina Sperl, garden correspondent for the regional German newspaper *Kölner Stadt-Anzeiger*.

This is reflected in his own garden, a three-and-a-half-acre site in a village near Düsseldorf, where he and his partner Michael Frinke have lived since 2006. 'It was the bed of the river Rhine 10,000 years ago, so the soil is a real mixture – some sandy, some loam,' Peter says of the garden, which has very different habitats and distinct atmospheres. There is a wide range of plants and a sense that everything has its place. Relatively open areas include grasses or grey-foliage plants, which are ideal for poor, sandy soil. A meadow of wild grasses has replaced what was once an extensive plot of mown grass. Neighbouring oak and beech woodland backs onto the garden on two sides, forming a magnificent backdrop for borders dominated by shade-loving and woodland plants.

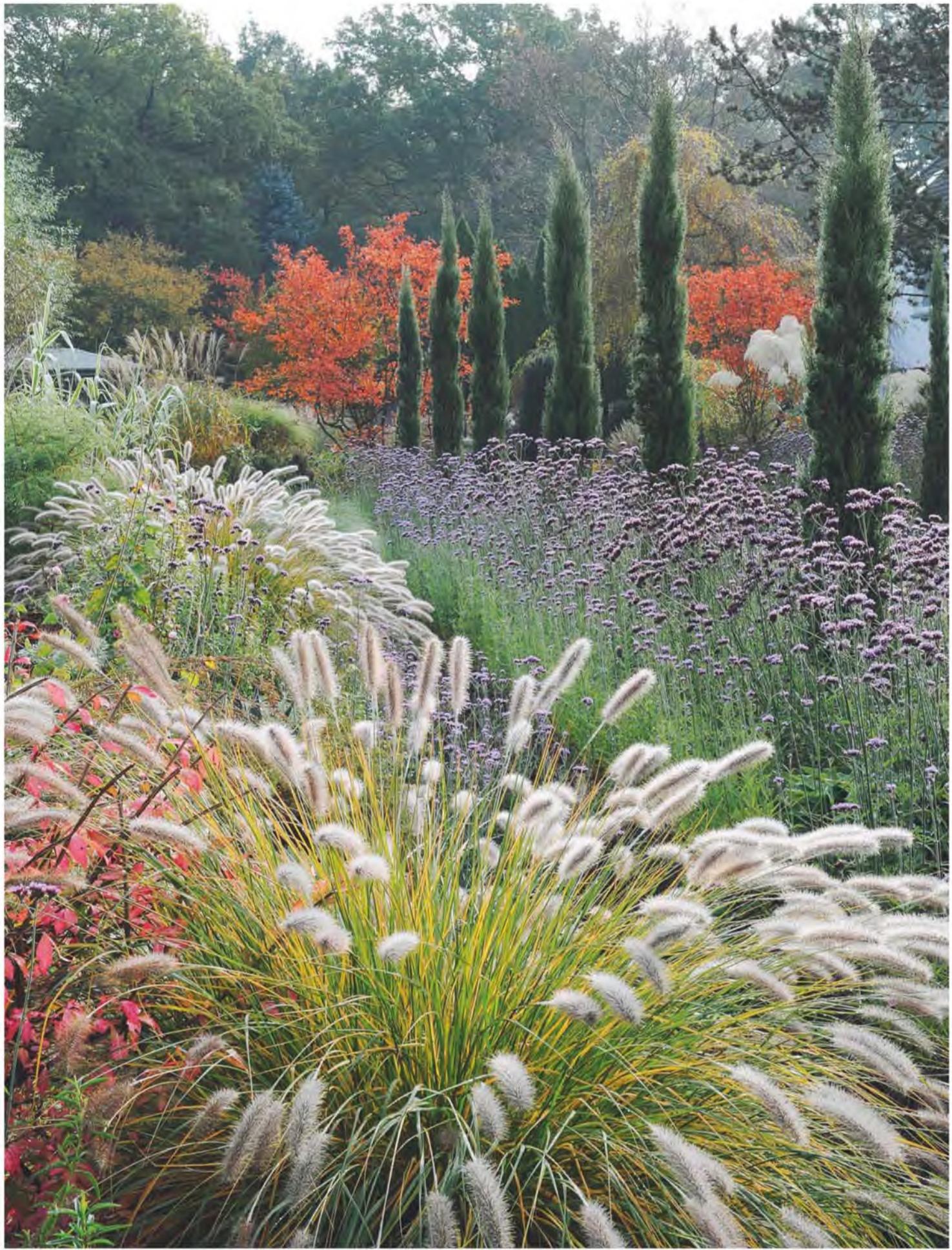
Even non-gardeners would appreciate the enormous range of plant life, and yet it does not come across as the garden of someone who collects plants. This is thanks to plenty of good structure from hedges and repeated planting. On the edge of the property, there is a row of Lombardy poplars, their shape echoed by willow trees (*Salix alba* var. *vitellina* 'Britzensis'), kept pruned to a similar shape, and by the Italian cypresses. In autumn and early winter, these are joined more subtly by the spikes and spires of many grasses and perennial seed heads.

Diversity is balanced by order. 'I like the idea of putting formal elements and natural things together,' says Peter. 'People in general like formal landscapes, but the trouble is they go too far and have formal planting, too. Formality works best with more naturalistic planting.' The woodland garden is a melange of autumn colour now, but was an essay in green a few months earlier and a colourful blaze of bulbs before that. 'Why are woodland gardens always completely informal?' he asks rhetorically. Here, a straight path cuts between a truly rich assortment of plant life, but with



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT A gravel pathway leads towards the nursery. Fiery *Amelanchier lamarkii* and *Cortaderia selloana* 'Sunningdale Silver'. Sunlight catches the arching seed heads of *Stipa gigantea*. Annual *Ricinus communis* leaves appear almost black against a background of trees. *Berberis thunbergii* 'Goldeledge'. *Pennisetum alopecuroides* 'Hameln' with *Verbena bonariensis* flowers. *Ensete ventricosum* 'Maurelii' and *Panicum virgatum* 'Cloud 9'. A setaria grass from Beth Chatto. A meadow area at the heart of the front garden (centre)







columns of variegated yellow Irish yew at intervals and, at one end, an eye-catching rusted urn – all of which provide formal elements to balance the wildness.

Many of the perennials and grasses that Peter grows have good seed heads, which give a sense of structure through the winter. However, in autumn, he particularly likes to 'combine plants that already have their winter skeletons with those that are still fresh'. Among these are sky-blue asters or *Salvia uliginosa* with dark seed heads like *Dipsacus fullonum*, and vertical seed heads such as *Phlomis russeliana*, with lime green *Euphorbia seguieriana* subsp. *niciciana*, which give a more horizontal line. He also mixes autumnal coloured plants with grasses valued for their shapes and outlines – for example, the orange flowers and silvery foliage of *Zauschneria californica* are combined with the bronze foliage grass *Anemanthele lessoniana*, or the beautifully coloured *Rhus typhina* – which Peter keeps low by coppicing – with *Pennisetum* grasses.

Autumn in this garden is a time to not only appreciate the last flowers of the season, but also feel secure in the knowledge that winter will look good. There are so many strongly vertical seed heads here that will survive at least until the first heavy snowfall, in many cases echoing the distinct shapes of the woody plants, which will be a feature right through until the warmth of next spring.

Peter was born into a gardening family. 'It was actually my grandmother who planted the seed,' he says. 'She had a nursery for cut flowers and was a breeder of cyclamen – she ran it until her eighties – and my mother had a flower shop.' In 1989, when he had just finished school and was about to start a course in landscape design, his mother's ill health meant he had to take over the flower shop and nursery. He did this for 10 years before spending some time in England. After a spell at Wisley, he went to work for Beth Chatto. 'Her garden was not the typical English garden. The plants and grasses touched me and, after a week, I knew that her garden was the place where I could find what I was looking for.' He worked for Beth on and off for two years and at the same time started a garden-design business back home.

In Germany, it is unusual not to do training or an apprenticeship but, as Peter says, 'I had been growing plants and putting them together since I was five, and even while I was running the nursery and cut-flower business I was already designing gardens for customers.' He now creates gardens for clients all over Germany, opens his own garden to the public three days a week and, for visitors tantalised by the botanical jewel box of his garden, runs a small nursery.

There is a huge array of plants in cultivation today, and meeting Peter and visiting his garden is a powerful reminder that they can all have an artistic potential and that collecting plants can result in a garden that possesses real form and structure □

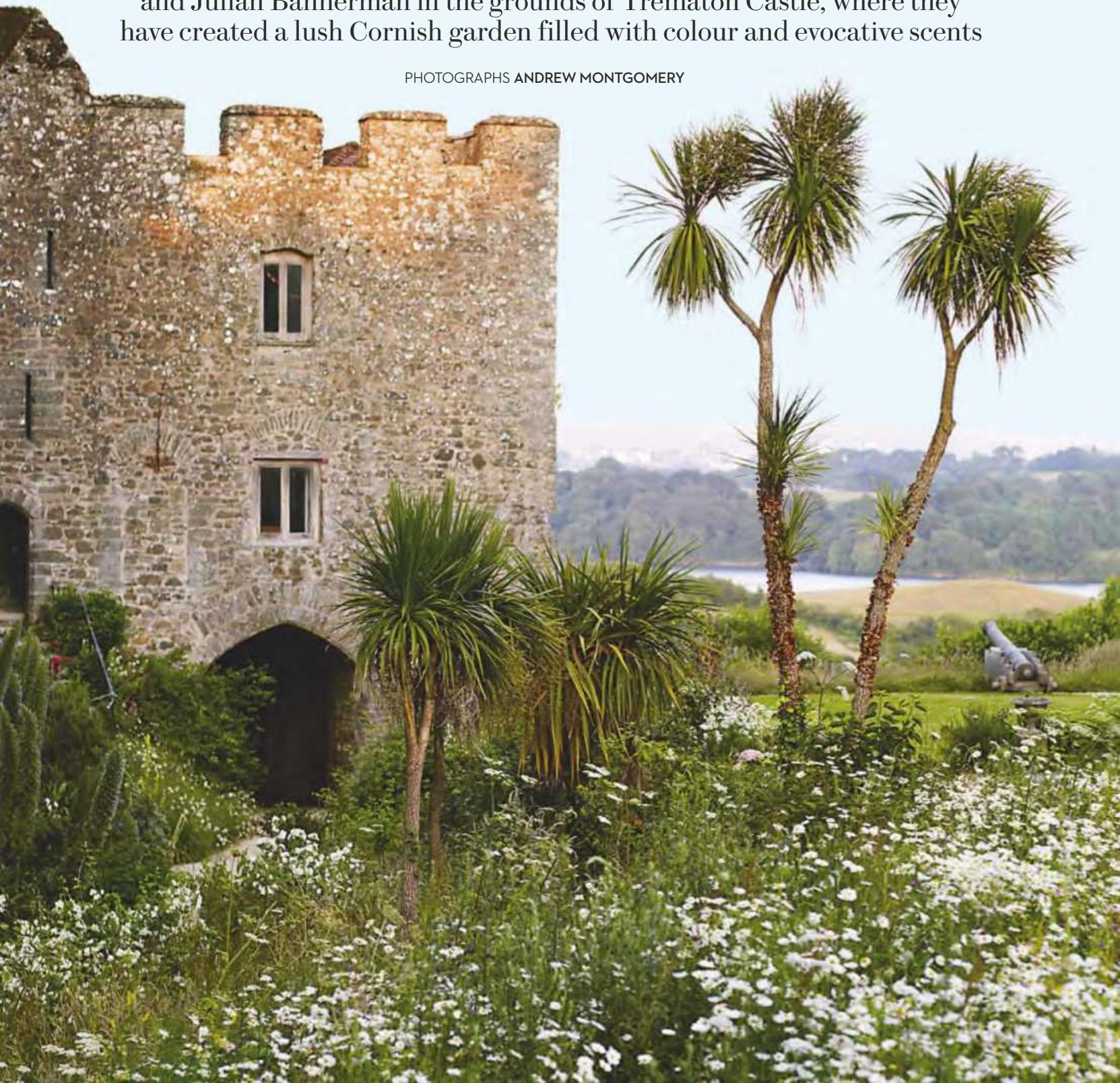
Peter Janke Gartenkonzepte: peter-janke-gartenkonzepte.de

OPPOSITE A line of light purple *Verbena bonariensis* runs parallel to the Italian cypresses, drawing the eye to the orange-red autumn leaves of *Amelanchier lamarckii* trees. In the foreground, *Pennisetum alopecuroides* 'Hamelin' provides shape and texture to admire in the winter. THIS PAGE FROM TOP Delicate *Cosmos bipinnatus* 'Sonata Pink'. Peter and his partner Michael walk along a grass path through the meadow. *Persicaria orientalis*, a spectacular, sometimes two-metre-tall annual that thrives in warm summers

BEAUTY IN ABUNDANCE

Concluding her series on garden designers, CLARE FOSTER visits Isabel and Julian Bannerman in the grounds of Trematon Castle, where they have created a lush Cornish garden filled with colour and evocative scents

PHOTOGRAPHS ANDREW MONTGOMERY





OPPOSITE The gatehouse of the fourteenth-century castle is now engulfed by banks of wildflowers, with a view of the Tamar Estuary at Devonport down below. THIS PAGE Julian and Isabel Bannerman underneath vast leaves of *Gunnera manicata*

If there was a matchmaking service to help garden designers find their ideal garden, Isabel and Julian Bannerman would undoubtedly have been paired with Trematon, a storybook motte-and-bailey castle overlooking Plymouth Sound. Known for their theatrical, flower-filled gardens, the Bannermans build mock ruins and architectural follies to set off lavish planting schemes – but at Trematon, the stage was already set, with ready-made ruins and a view as good as an aerial photograph providing the setting for an extraordinary new garden.

In 2012, they left their much-loved house and garden at Hanham Court in Gloucestershire to create a new life for themselves in Cornwall, leasing the ruined castle, a Georgian house and nine acres of land from the Duchy of Cornwall. They had first looked at the property a decade or so earlier, but with school-age children and a developing garden at Hanham, they had decided against it. When the lease came up again in 2012, it felt like fate was offering them a second chance. ‘We had designed the garden in our minds all those years ago,’ says Julian. ‘There was no argument about what to do.’

In just a few years, a remarkable garden has emerged in typical Bannerman style: romantic, intriguing and exciting, the sort of place that brings out the child in you. Against the backdrop of the castle keep and its fourteenth-century crenellated walls, borders are already overflowing with tangled roses, scented shrubs and richly coloured perennials. Banks of wildflowers tumble down steep slopes and giant echiums thrive in the shelter of the mound and keep. The most amazing thing was that nobody had really made a garden here before. Norah Lindsay had visited in the Thirties and planted a border, from which a *Magnolia grandiflora* and *Cornus capitata* still grow in front of the curving bailey walls. The soil, however, was almost non-existent, with archaeological footings preventing deep digging, so no other tenants had attempted any significant planting. The first step, then, was to bring in 200 tonnes of soil and manure, which had to be borrowed from the edge of the castle grounds.

The couple spent the first year moving soil, tackling epic proportions of bindweed and petasites, and planting magnolias and snowdrops in the woods. They had the help of just one other gardener, two days a week, with other design work taking up most of their time. The following year it mostly rained and they spent every weekend planting up borders in the mud, wondering whether they had done the right thing.

Despite initially dampening the spirits, the rain was beneficial; just a few years on, the infant plants have grown impossibly tall and lush, revelling in the maritime climate of the southwest. The angular lines of the house, built in 1807 within the old castle courtyard, are now cushioned by generous borders to frame the view, while at the back of the house a new double border slopes down from the wisteria-clad walls to meet the eye with layer upon layer of seductive plants. These include scented philadelphus, daphne and roses, and colourful herbaceous plants tall enough to create impact against the towering walls,

with thalictrums, irises, lilies, salvias, campanulas and a delicate smattering of umbellifers to give the planting a wilder edge. The effect is like an illuminated manuscript, with opulent colours, woven textures and a feeling of rich abundance. A set of trademark Bannerman obelisks made from silvery oak marks the centre of the border, edging a set of shallow steps.

Scent is and always has been central to the Bannermans’ planting design. ‘It adds another dimension of sensuality; subtle but powerfully transporting,’ says Isabel. Sweet-smelling philadelphus is a favourite. ‘The old fashioned *Philadelphus coronarius* is still the best for scent and waxiness.’ They also have *P. maculatus* ‘Mexican Jewel’, a small shrub from Mexico with flowers that smell like bubblegum, and *P. ‘Starbright’*, grown more for its big, blowsy flowers than its strong scent, used in the middle of a border ‘like a fountain’, says Isabel. Scented roses are everywhere: shrub roses in the borders, rambling roses given free rein on the walls. ‘We’ve got roses like ‘Rambling Rector’ that waft their scent on the wind,’ says Julian. ‘Others, like *Rosa rubiginosa* ‘La Belle Distinguée’, smell best when it rains.’ Bordering the front croquet lawn is a bank of aromatic cistus, rosemary and lavender, through which you can climb a set of higgledy stone steps to a tiny seating area in the ramparts, breathing in the heady scent.

The cultivated borders bleed off into wilder areas of meadow planting, linking with the further reaches of the garden – the orchard, where gnarled apple and mulberry trees are underplanted with camassias and *Narcissus* ‘Pheasant’s Eye’, and the motte crowned with the circular stone keep, where a phenomenal succession of wildflowers spangles the steep slopes throughout spring and summer. ‘It looks almost like Transylvania,’ says Isabel. ‘First there are solid primroses, then bluebells, purple orchids and campions. In summer, it’s absolutely covered in aromatic wild herbs: marjoram, woodbine and fennel.’

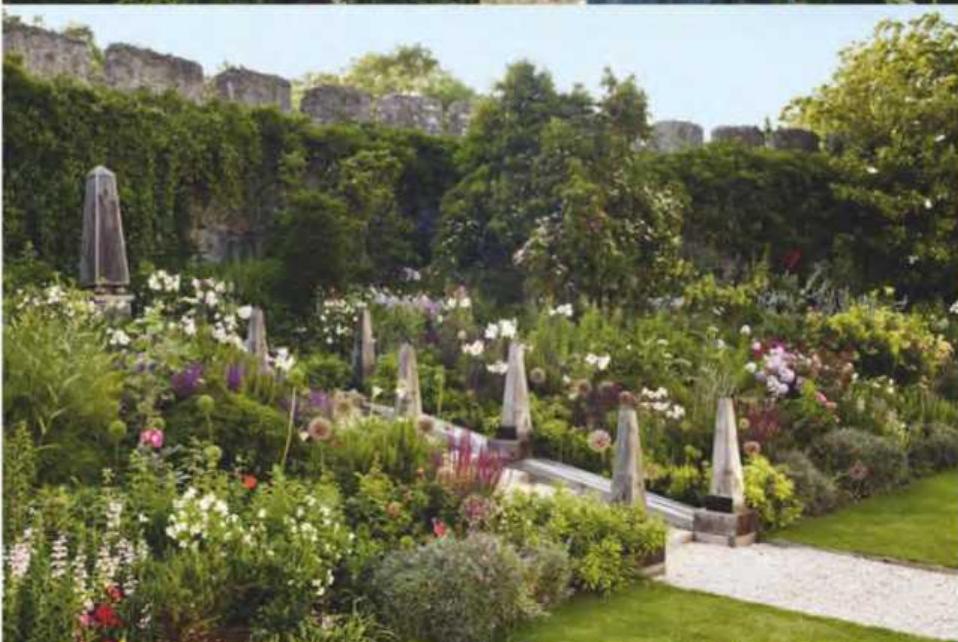
These wild areas excite the Bannermans the most – the places where nature does the gardening, and all they have to do is weed out the thugs so that the wildflowers can burst forth. Further yet, and there are knotted woods leading down to a quiet estuary inlet and an intriguing walled garden on a steep slope, which may have once been used to grow fruit trees. Completely overgrown when the Bannermans arrived, it has been cleared, but they have yet to decide what to do in terms of development.

Really, this garden has only just begun. The Bannermans are matter of fact about what lies ahead. ‘Designing gardens is just bringing out the best in a site,’ says Julian. ‘It’s like being a couturier – everyone’s a different shape and size, and every garden is different. Often, you just need to know when to stop’ □

Trematon Castle Gardens will reopen in spring 2016. Visit bannermandesign.com for more details and opening times

A remarkable garden has emerged: romantic, intriguing and exciting, the sort of place that brings out the child in you

OPPOSITE CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT The house was built in the castle courtyard in 1807 and now overlooks a croquet lawn. Isabel cutting sweet peas. The castle keep sits on top of a mound carpeted with wildflowers. Pale pink *Penstemon ‘Sour Grapes’*. Old steps, too narrow to be used, are colonised by centranthus. Julian in the vegetable garden. Wooden canons by the croquet lawn. The new double borders at the back of the house are bisected by shallow steps and wooden obelisks



WINE & FOOD

TASTE NOTES | RECIPES | SIMPLE SUPPERS



Sustainably sourced artisan charcuterie

TASTE NOTES

NEWS, REVIEWS AND TIPS FOR COOKS AND WINE LOVERS, BY JOANNA SIMON

Artisan charcuterie is a good present for a carnivorous foodie or an easy option for festive entertaining. Cannon & Cannon's British cured meats, made from sustainably and ethically farmed breeds, come in an array of flavours, including Cornish seaweed and cider salami, cobnut saucisson, Dorset smoked mutton and nduja. A bundle of six cured, air-dried sausages is £25.95, spicy nduja is £19.99 for 500g, and a wicker hamper with five different sausages and two packs of sliced meat is £39.99. There are also gift vouchers (£25, £50, £125) for its Meat School courses and events. cannonandcannon.com

COCOA COUTURE

Put a top chocolate producer with a leading designer and you get delicious and glamorously packaged chocolates. **Valrhona** and **Christian Lacroix** have partnered on two boxes, a dark chocolate selection and a combination box of milk and dark with flavours such as cappuccino and salted caramel, both £24.99 for 16 chocolates (150g), Selfridges.



WINES OF
THE MONTH

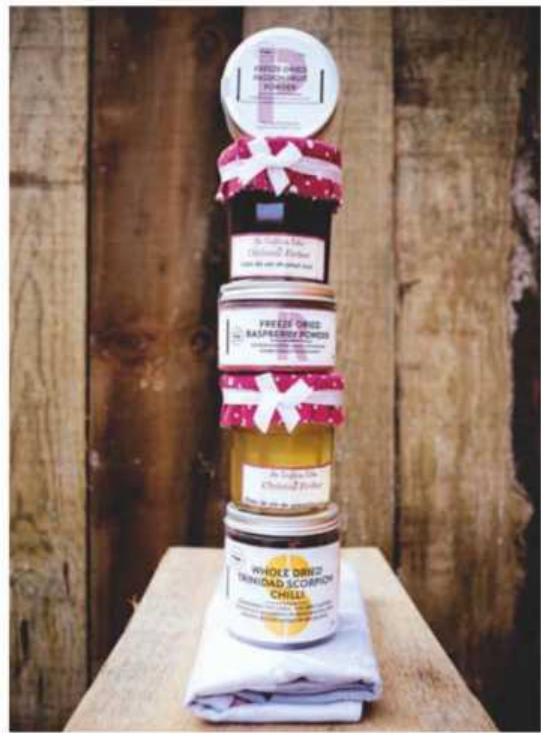


French classics never fail to please at Christmas and these three, which are textbook new examples from Corney & Barrow's revamped house range, look the part, too. The stylish, fresh and supple white **Burgundy 2014** is from Domaine Dominique Cornin, £11.50. The ripe, honeyed yet zesty **Sauternes 2010**, £12.50 for 37.5cl, and the dark, succulent **Margaux 2010**, £20.95, are both from

Maison Sichel. corneyandbarrow.com

Sous Chef is an online paradise for cooks and gourmets and full of foodie stocking fillers.

Things I've earmarked include: fearsomely hot Trinidad scorpion chillies, £5.95 for 20g; Christine Ferber Gewürztraminer and Pinot Noir gelées de vin, £6.95 for 220g; freeze-dried raspberry and passion fruit powders, £6.50 and £5.95 for 50g; and French vin rouge and vin blanc cotton tea towels, £7.25 each. souschef.co.uk



*The secret ingredient used by chefs to achieve the authentic texture in their Creole and Cajun gumbos is a secret no longer. **File powder** (dried, ground sassafras leaves) is now available in the UK through Seasoned Pioneers; £3.95 for 26g. seasonedpioneers.com*

HIDDEN TREASURES

It's rare to find a long-forgotten wine region, least of all in somewhere as famous as Burgundy. But hidden in the hills roughly halfway between Chablis and Beaune is **Coteaux de l'Auxois**, where there once were over 11,000 acres of vines and now there are barely 100. In 2013, Chablis producer Simonnet-Febvre bought vineyards there and is now planting new ones with Chardonnay and the unusual white Auxerrois. Its first Auxerrois wine, the dry, gently peachy, lemony Simonnet-Febvre Esprit de Lyre 2014, is £12.49, Partridges of Kensington (020-7581 0535).



The **Kokoa Collection** range of drinking chocolate includes five varieties, from Ivory Coast white and Venezuela at 58% to Madagascar at 82%; from £5.99 for a 210g bag, from Ocado. These glass and teak tins and bamboo tongs are also available to buy. kokoacollection.com □

Sugar, spice & all things nice

WHAT DO YOU GIVE A PERSON WHO HAS EVERYTHING AT CHRISTMAS? **CAROLINE BARTY** SUGGESTS THOUGHTFUL FOOD PRESENTS, FROM BLUEBERRY CHOCOLATE TRUFFLES TO A WHOLE SIDE OF CURED SALMON

PHOTOGRAPHS YUKI SUGIURA | FOOD PREPARATION AND STYLING LAURA URSCHEL
WINE RECOMMENDATIONS JOANNA SIMON | TABLE STYLING ALEXANDER BREEZE

1 SLOW-DRIED TOMATOES IN OLIVE OIL

These tomatoes will fill 2 x 0.5-litre Kilner jars, although you could fill 3 or 4 smaller jars (See 'How to sterilise jars' overleaf). Once opened, they should be kept in the fridge and used within 1 week.

- **2kg** vine-ripened tomatoes, about 18-20, halved horizontally
- **12** sprigs thyme
- **12** sprigs oregano or marjoram
- **400-450ml** extra-virgin olive oil

1 Heat the oven to 140 °C/fan oven 120 °C/mark 1. Line 2 roasting tins with non-stick baking parchment. Lay the tomatoes in the tins and season with salt and freshly ground black pepper. Scatter over the thyme and oregano. Cook in the oven for about 3-5 hours, depending on size, until they are almost dry but not shrivelled. Leave to cool completely.

2 Pack tightly into sterilised Kilner jars and pour over the olive oil, making sure there are no air pockets and that the tomatoes are completely covered by the oil. Seal and refrigerate.

2 MUSTARD WITH ROQUEFORT

Good spread on a slice of rare roast beef, this homemade mustard also makes a handy ready-made sauce for beef or chicken. Simply stir 1-2tbsp into crème fraîche or double cream. I find mustard seeds vary enormously in taste and texture; my favourites are from healthysupplies.co.uk. Keep

this in the fridge and be sure to use it within 2 weeks. Makes about 230g.

- **55g** yellow mustard seeds
- **45ml** cider vinegar
- **1/4tsp** caster sugar
- **2tbsp** light olive oil
- **Maldon salt, to taste**
- **55g** Roquefort cheese

1 Soak the mustard seeds in the vinegar and 75ml water for 48 hours. Add the sugar, spoon into the small bowl of a food processor, or use a hand-held liquidiser, and process until you have a smooth paste - you may need to add a bit of water. Slowly pour in the oil, keeping the motor running and add 2-3 good pinches of Maldon salt.

2 Crumble the Roquefort and stir into the mustard. Spoon into small sterilised jars, seal and refrigerate.

3 DUCK RILLETTES

3 I love homemade rillettes, so I always make enough to keep a jar or two aside for private consumption. A jar will keep for about 2 weeks in the fridge. Makes about 750g.

- **6** duck legs
- **3tsp** Maldon sea salt
- **3** shallots, peeled and roughly chopped
- **4** garlic cloves, finely sliced
- **6** sprigs thyme, plus **1tsp** finely chopped thyme leaves
- **3** bay leaves

- **1kg** duck or goose fat
- **70g** ready-to-eat soft prunes, chopped

To be served with

- **Toasted bread and cornichons**

1 Place the duck in a large dish and rub the salt over the legs. Scatter over the chopped shallots, garlic, 6 thyme sprigs and bay leaves. Cover and refrigerate overnight.

2 Heat the oven to 150 °C/fan oven 130 °C/mark 2. Lift out the duck legs and wash under cold water. Pat dry and place in a large flameproof and oven-proof dish. Discard the shallots, garlic and herbs. Pour or spoon the duck or goose fat over the duck legs and slowly bring to a gentle simmer. Cover with a lid or aluminium foil and cook in the oven for 2½ hours. Leave to cool completely.

3 When the duck legs are cool, lift out of the fat (set it aside to use later). Remove the skin and shred the leg meat into a mixing bowl. Gently stir in the prunes and 1tsp chopped thyme leaves, then season to taste with salt and freshly ground black pepper. Pack the mixture tightly into sterilised jars and smooth the surface. Cover with a thin layer of the cooking fat. Seal and refrigerate.

To drink A medium-full, rounded white that isn't too sharp and zesty, or a soft, juicy red that can be served slightly cooler than average, such as Pinot Noir or Valpolicella, or an easy-going, spicy Rhône or Languedoc: **Taste the Difference Languedoc Red 2014**, £8, Sainsbury's. ▷



1

2

3

*You can use
the fat that you
have left over
from cooking the
rillettes for roast
potatoes*



4 CHEESE SABLES WITH CUMIN, FENNEL AND NIGELLA SEEDS

These little cheese biscuits always prove popular at a drinks party. This recipe makes about 66 biscuits and they freeze well if you want to make them in advance.

- 200g strong white flour, plus extra for rolling
- 2tsp mustard powder
- ½tsp baking powder
- 200g unsalted butter
- 100g grated Parmesan
- 100g grated aged Gouda
- 2 egg yolks
- 1tsp each cumin, fennel and nigella seeds

1 Place everything except the seeds in a food processor and process until it comes together in a ball.

2 Divide the mixture into 3 even pieces. Fold the cumin seeds into one third, the fennel seeds into another and the nigella seeds into the last piece of dough. Roll out each piece of dough on a floured surface to the thickness of a pound coin. Stamp out 4-5cm rounds and lay on 3 baking sheets. Chill for 20 minutes.

3 Heat the oven to 200°C/fan oven 180°C/mark 6. Bake for about 8-10 minutes until golden brown. Leave to cool for a minute or two before transferring to a wire rack. Store in an airtight container or freeze.

To drink These delicately spiced cheese biscuits are perfect with Champagne and other fine sparkling wines, which are often overpowered by shop-bought savoury nibbles: **Henners Brut Reserve 2010**, £34.99, Virgin Wines.

5 PISTACHIO AND ARTICHOKE PÂTÉ

This is delicious spread on crusty bread, or stir in some crème fraîche to turn it into a sauce for pasta. You can use a jar of artichokes or buy them from the deli counter, and they can be char-grilled or not. Keep in the fridge and use within 10 days. Makes about 375g.

- 80g shelled pistachios, lightly toasted
- 15g flat-leaf parsley
- 15g basil
- 285g artichokes in oil, drained, but reserve the oil
- 25g grated Parmesan
- 1 small garlic clove, crushed

Place all the ingredients in a food processor and add 3–4tbsp of the oil from the artichokes. Process to a smooth paste. Taste and season with salt and freshly ground black pepper. Spoon the pâté into a sterilised jar and seal.

To drink Whether served as a canapé or starter, or made into a dip or sauce with crème fraîche, this needs a crisp, lively, dry white, such as a Sauvignon Blanc, Riesling, Grüner Veltliner, good Soave or a Cheverny: **Domaine du Salvard Cheverny 2014**, The Wine Society (01438-741177). At a drinks party, English sparkling or Champagne, as with the sablés, go very well.

6 CRANBERRY, APPLE AND CHILLI JAM

This is delicious with cold meats and cheese. Ideally, leave for 1 month to mature before opening. Makes about 1.4kg (equal to 3 x 454g jam jars).

- 5 red chillies (medium heat), deseeded and finely chopped
- 6 large Bramley apples, about 1.3kg, peeled, cored and roughly chopped
- 300g cranberries
- 300g caster sugar
- 300g cider vinegar
- 5 garlic cloves, crushed
- 2tsp Maldon sea salt

1 Place all the ingredients in a preserving pan or very large saucepan. Add 200ml water. Over a moderate heat, bring to the boil, then turn down the heat and simmer gently for about 1–1½ hours until thick. Stir regularly to break up the apples and cranberries.

2 Spoon the jam into warm, sterilised jars, seal and leave to cool.



7

7 JUNIPER AND CITRUS-CURED SALMON

Any host or hostess would be thrilled to receive a home-cured side of salmon, perfect for feeding a large number at Christmas or New Year. This can be kept in the fridge for a week: keep it on the skin and wrap tightly in cling film, cutting slices off as you need them. Serves 6–8 as a starter or 10 as canapés.

- 400g rock salt
- 250g caster sugar
- 60g dill
- Grated zest of 2 lemons
- Grated zest of 2 limes
- 1tbsp juniper berries
- 1.5kg side salmon, skin on

To be served with

- Brown bread and pickled cucumber

1 Place everything except the salmon in a food processor and blitz to a paste. Lay the salmon skin-side down in a large dish and spread the paste evenly over the flesh. Cover and refrigerate for 48 hours.

2 To serve, lift the salmon out of the cure and wash under cold water. Pat dry and lay on a board. Discard the cure. Carve into thin slices to serve.

To drink A dry white – still or sparkling – with good acidity. Chablis, Champagne, English sparkling, Chenin Blancs from the Loire and dry or slightly off-dry Rieslings (from Alsace, Austria, Germany or the southern hemisphere) all work well: **Koenig Alsace Riesling Réserve 2014**, £7.99, Lidl. ▷

8

8 PEAR AND STAR ANISE VODKA

You can leave the pears and star anise macerating in the vodka for up to a month, but it already tastes delicious after a week. Keep the vodka in the freezer and serve in iced shot glasses.

- **1-2 star anise**
- **6 ripe pears, peeled, cored and roughly chopped**
- **100g caster sugar**
- **1 litre vodka**

1 Place 1 star anise and the rest of the ingredients in a sterilised 2-litre Kilner jar and stir well. Seal and leave in a cool, dark place for at least 1 week or up to 1 month, but check the flavour after the first few days: if the star anise flavour is faint, add the other star anise.

2 When ready, strain the vodka through a sieve lined with muslin and pour into bottles. Seal with a tight-fitting lid.

9 PECAN, DATE AND CINNAMON MUFFIN MIX

The muffin mix will keep, unopened, for 3-4 months, but the muffins should be eaten on the day that they are made. You will need a 0.5-litre Kilner jar. The mix makes about 8 muffins.

- **150g plain flour**
- **50g plain wholemeal flour**
- **2½tsp baking powder**
- **55g golden caster sugar**
- **115g ready chopped dates**
- **50g pecan nuts, lightly toasted and finely chopped**
- **1tsp ground cinnamon**

Place all the ingredients in a bowl and mix well. Pour into the Kilner jar and seal. Attach a label with the following instructions:

To make the muffins

Heat the oven to 200°C/fan oven 180°C/ mark 6. Line a 12-cup muffin tray with paper cases. You will need about 8 or 9. Tip the contents of the jar into a mixing bowl. Melt 70g unsalted butter and leave to cool slightly. Whisk in 1 egg, 100ml buttermilk and 70ml milk. Pour the liquid into the dry ingredients and stir just enough to combine – it's important not to over mix. Spoon into the muffin cases and bake in the oven for 20-25 minutes until risen and golden.

9





10 TRUFFLES WITH SLOE-GIN BLUEBERRIES

The soaked blueberries provide a hit of boozy fruitiness to these decadent truffles. Makes about 40.

- 50g dried blueberries
- 50ml sloe gin
- 300g plain chocolate, 70 per cent cocoa solids
- 90g unsalted butter, cut into cubes
- 55g runny honey
- 250ml double cream
- 30g cocoa powder, sifted

1 Place the blueberries and sloe gin in a small saucepan and bring to the boil. Take off the heat and leave to plump up overnight.

2 Roughly chop the chocolate and place in a mixing

bowl with the butter and honey. Pour the cream into a saucepan and slowly bring to the boil. Pour over the chocolate, leave for 2-3 minutes, then gently stir with a plastic or wooden spatula or spoon, until the chocolate has melted. Leave to cool, then stir in the blueberries. Refrigerate until the chocolate is firm enough to scoop and hold its shape.

3 Take a melon baller or teaspoon and scoop out small truffles. Roll in the cocoa powder and place on a tray lined with non-stick baking parchment. Refrigerate until hard. They will keep in the fridge for 7-10 days (cover to prevent them picking up food smells).

To drink If you want to make an even more decadent present of these truffles, give a bottle to drink with them - sloe gin, sweet Black Muscat wine,

late-bottled vintage port or red fortified wine, such as Maury or Banyuls: **Domaine La Tour Vieille Banyuls Réserve**, £19.75, Yapp Brothers (01747-860423).

11 SPICED HOT CHOCOLATE

This will make enough for about 8 x 150ml mugs of hot chocolate. For a really sumptuous drink, heat a mixture of milk and whipping cream and top with freshly whipped cream. There is no need to keep the mix in the fridge unless stored in a really warm kitchen.

- 150g dark chocolate, 70 per cent cocoa solids
- 4tbsp cocoa powder
- 4tbsp dark brown muscovado sugar
- 1tsp ground cinnamon
- Pinch of ground nutmeg
- Pinch of ground ginger
- Pinch of ground cloves
- 1 vanilla pod

Finely grate the chocolate and refrigerate for about 20 minutes to firm up. Stir in all the remaining ingredients apart from the vanilla pod. Pour the mixture into a presentation bag or jar and add the vanilla pod. Attach a label with the following instructions:

To make the hot chocolate

Heat 150ml milk, or milk and cream, and bring to the boil. Place 3tbsp of the hot chocolate mix in a mug and pour over about 2-3tbsp hot milk. Stir until smooth, then pour in the remaining milk. Add the vanilla pod, leave for a few minutes to infuse, then stir and serve. You can reuse the vanilla pod - wash well after use and leave to dry out.

For tableware information, see Stockists page

How to sterilise jars

Heat the oven to 140 °C/fan oven 120 °C/mark 1. Remove the rubber seals if using Kilner jars. Wash the jars in hot soapy water and rinse well.

Transfer immediately to the oven and leave for 15 minutes to dry out.

Simmer the rubber seals in a pan of water for 10 minutes, then place on kitchen paper and pat dry □

FRUITY FEAST

LOUISA CARTER CREATES AN ALL-IN-ONE LAMB DISH RICH WITH WINTER FLAVOURS, FOLLOWED BY EASY BAKED APPLES FOR DESSERT. ALL RECIPES SERVE 6

SLOW-ROAST LAMB WITH POTATOES, CLEMENTINES AND PRUNES

This requires little preparation and is then left to its own devices. It takes about 4 hours to cook, but can then be left covered at 110°C/fan oven 90°C/mark 1/4 for 2-3 hours.

The meat will pull off the bone easily, so no clever carving skills are needed.

- 1.2kg waxy potatoes, scrubbed • 2 large onions, sliced into half moons (about 1cm thick) • 150g pitted prunes, roughly chopped
- 600ml chicken or vegetable stock • 2-2.5kg shoulder of lamb, on the bone
- 6 sprigs rosemary • 2 cloves garlic, sliced • 8-10 seedless clementines

1 Heat the oven to 200°C/fan oven 180°C/mark 6. Slice the potatoes as thinly as you can - a mandoline slicer or food processor with mandoline blade attachment makes this easier.

2 Toss the potatoes, onions and prunes together in a large roasting tin, then pour in the stock. Sit the lamb on top and cut three long slashes, about 1cm deep, into it. Season the lamb with salt and pepper. Lay the rosemary sprigs and slices of garlic along each slash.

3 Halve two of the clementines and squeeze the juice over the lamb, then place the halves in the tin with their skins still on. Peel the remaining clementines, cut into 1cm-thick slices and lay on top of the lamb.

4 Roast for 20 minutes, baste the lamb with the juices, lower the oven temperature to 150°C/fan oven 130°C/mark 2 and cook for 2 hours. Baste again, adding more stock if the potatoes are looking dry, cover with greaseproof paper and foil, and cook for a further 2 hours until tender. Before serving, rest, covered, for 15 minutes. Pull the lamb off the bone using two forks and serve with the potatoes, clementine slices and any remaining juices.

BAKED APPLES WITH CRANBERRIES, WALNUTS AND SPICED SYRUP

These apples can be served hot from the oven, but I love them chilled, with whipped cream or cold custard. If you are serving them cold, they can be made 2-3 days ahead.

- 6 large Bramley apples • 120g soft brown sugar • 100g shelled walnuts, finely chopped • 75g dried cranberries • 1 large or 2 small bay leaves
- 1 large or 2 small cinnamon sticks, snapped in half • 1 vanilla pod, split lengthways, or 1½tsp vanilla extract **To serve** Lightly whipped cream or cold vanilla custard (or ice cream or hot custard if serving hot)

1 Heat the oven to 180°C/fan oven 160°C/mark 4. Core the apples, then score a line through the skin all around each apple, about 2cm from the top. (This will stop them bursting during cooking.) Arrange in a baking dish that gives them a little bit of space - but not too much or the syrup will burn.

2 In a bowl, mix together the brown sugar, walnuts and cranberries. Then use this mixture to fill the hole in each apple, packing it down gently and letting any extra spill into the dish. Scatter the bay leaf, cinnamon and vanilla pod pieces between the apples, then pour 250ml water into the dish.

3 Bake for 45 minutes, basting halfway. When cooked, the apples should be fluffy and the liquid reduced to a thin, cordial-like syrup (it will thicken slightly as it cools). If the syrup is too thin, strain into a saucepan and boil vigorously for a few minutes to reduce, then pour around the apples. If cooled, they will keep in the fridge, covered, for up to 3 days. Serve with the syrup spooned over and around each apple.

OTHER OPTIONS FOR BAKED APPLES

Swap walnuts for pecans or almonds, and cranberries for sultanas, chopped apricots or sour cherries. Add grated orange or lemon zest and juice • Fill with prunes, orange zest and dark muscovado sugar, and use brandy or calvados instead of water • Mix equal parts softened butter, porridge oats, demerara sugar and ground ginger as a filling • If in a hurry, just fill each with a spoonful of brown sugar, dot with a knob of butter and pour water into the tin □



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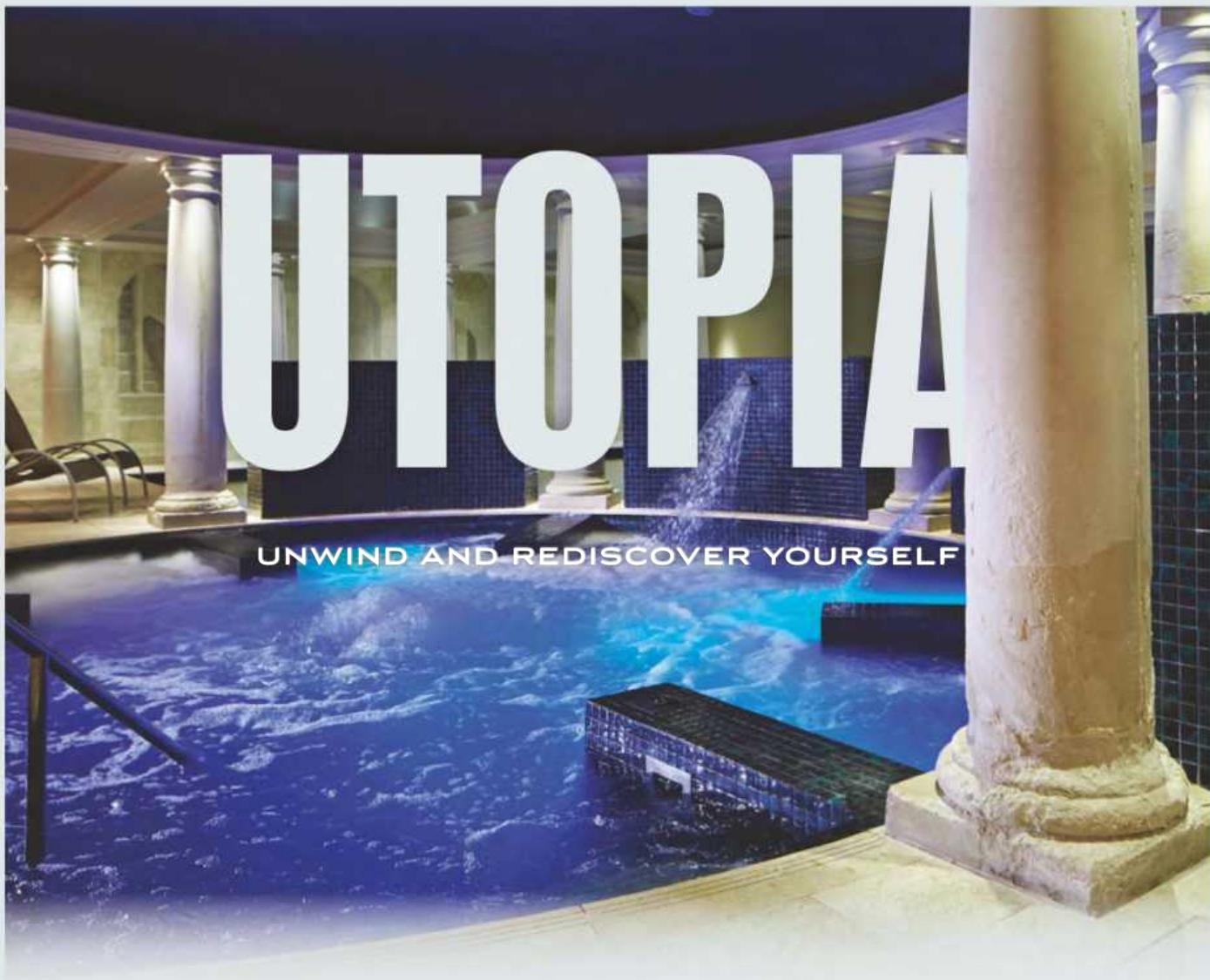


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TRAVEL

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PARADISE FOUND

CHARLOTTE TOTTENHAM VENTURES BEYOND THE BEACH ON THE ANDAMAN ISLAND OF HAVELOCK

As the ferry leaves Port Blair, capital of the Andaman and Nicobar Islands, and speeds across the waves to the small outpost of Havelock Island, I get chatting to an octogenarian anthropologist, who tells me this is his seventeenth trip to this archipelago in the Bay of Bengal. What he most wants to talk about is North Sentinel Island, in the west of the Andamans, home to what is thought to be one of the largest groups of 'uncontacted' tribal peoples. Some speculate that the Sentinelese have lived on the island for 60,000 years. During recent attempts by scientists - after the 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami - to approach them, they chased the scientists away with arrows. My fellow passenger describes them as the most isolated tribe in the world.

By the time I'm ensconced on a deserted beach, sipping fresh coconut water and drifting into a perfectly sun-drenched sleep, I wonder how anyone could dream of attempting to disturb the Sentinelese people in their sublime native idyll.

Havelock has a long-standing reputation as a backpackers' paradise and is just beginning to offer resorts and hotels that are rather less rustic. At SeaShell and Barefoot, the two best resorts on the island, you can expect warm hospitality, delicious fish curries and expert advice on scuba diving. The island is a haven for divers and is one of the few places in the world where you can swim with the endangered leatherback turtle.

ways and means

Double rooms at SeaShell Havelock (seashellhavelock.com) and Barefoot at Havelock (booked through i-escape.com) cost from £100, half-board. Flights to Port Blair via mainland India cost from £550 return with Jet Airways (jetairways.com) The ferry from Port Blair to Havelock Island costs about £15.

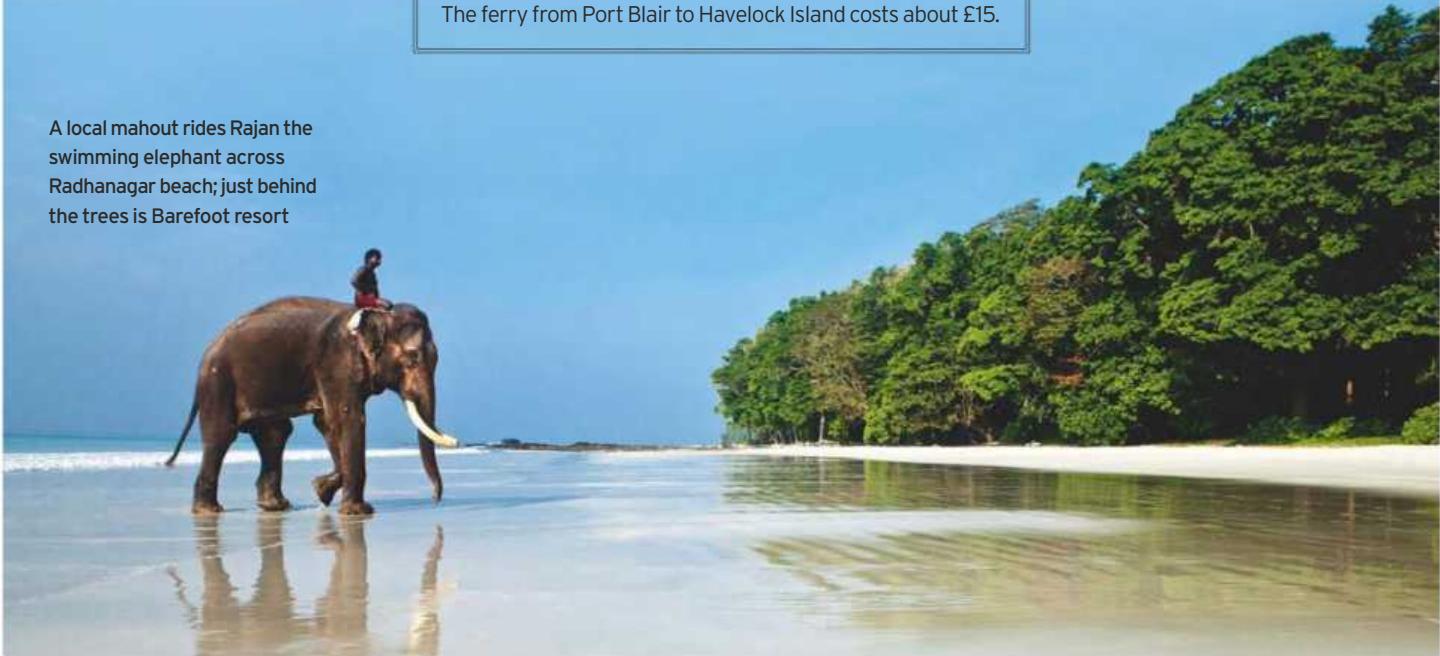
When I left the seashore and ventured into the depths of the rainforest to explore, I was met with the heady fragrance of the majestic 30-metre-tall mahua trees. Like something from a fairy-tale, the flowers of the mahua blossom at night and fall to the ground by sunrise, creating a carpet as white as the sand. This tree is integral to the life of the islander, from the cradle to the grave; mahua leaves are woven into cups and plates used during birth festivals and bodies are anointed with oil made from the seeds during funeral rituals.

These festivals take place in a small settlement in the centre of the island, described as a town but more akin to a village. Wandering amid chai stalls and immaculately stocked fruit stands, I feasted on jalebi sweets, received beaming smiles from endless children and joined a very competitive game of cricket.

One morning, I rose at dawn to pay a visit to the Blue Lagoon on Radhanagar beach, where I swam next to Rajan, the world's last ocean swimming elephant, while he had his morning dip. One afternoon, I tentatively explored the mangroves where the wild saltwater crocodiles live. One evening, I swam out to a moored fishing boat where, in the company of a white-bellied sea eagle, I gazed out at the horizon while the expansive sky above me turned a burning crimson.

If I was on *Desert Island Discs*, I would have a recording of the song of the Andaman scops owl as one of my records and the mahua tree as my luxury, and live out my tropical Havelock days in blissful serenity □

A local mahout rides Rajan the swimming elephant across Radhanagar beach; just behind the trees is Barefoot resort



WINTER NIGHTS AND MAGICAL LIGHTS

STEPHANIE DRAX PACKS EXTRA LAYERS FOR AN ILLUMINATING ARCTIC ADVENTURE IN EUROPE'S LAST WILDERNESS

Before I had ever set foot in Swedish Lapland, the name conjured up ideas of snow, stars and the spectral wonder of the *aurora borealis*. During the 90-minute flight north from Stockholm to the region's capital, Lulea, I am faced with another defining characteristic: space. Located within the Arctic Circle, Swedish Lapland is Europe's largest remaining wilderness, a natural wonderland of mountains, dense forests, river valleys and the Lulea archipelago of 1,300 coastal islands, all of which supports, on average, just two people per square kilometre. It's as if I have carved a window into another world - a Philip Pullman fantasy tale ripe with adventure - where now, in February, winter has set in.

I am met at Lulea airport by Fredrik Broman, a photographer who set up camp - the Aurora Safari Camp - here in 2013. He takes me to meet our story's first character: Lars Eriksson, a local Sami elder who lives in Flakaberg village. The Sami are the only indigenous people in the European Union, and their cultural region, Sapmi, spreads across the borders of Sweden, Finland, Norway and Russia. Lars is wearing traditional *gakti* - a black woollen jacket that flares into a skirt with a crimson and yellow trim, and a pair of leather trousers. His pointy boots are made from reindeer hide. He greets us jovially, chuckling from behind a long, white beard.

Behind his pine log cabin on the edge of a forest, Lars introduces me to his reindeer herd. The small, soft creatures respond immediately to his call and nibble lichen from his hand. Reindeer are the main Sami source of income, reared for their meat and fur. We sit in a cosy hut for a *fika* - teatime - of cloudberry cake and warm cinnamon rolls. Lars drinks tea from a wooden cup he keeps on his belt and recounts stories of a life shepherding herds from mountains to forests, sweeping across the snow on his skis of silver birch. The Sami philosophy is to live with nature and leave no trace. Driving through a snowy landscape that is peppered with evergreens and with elegant red clapboard houses, a visitor can only concur. The enchanting

surroundings command such respect. Fredrik tells me about the region's photogenic seasons, from the gentle illumination of a midnight summer sun to the riot of colour in the blaze of autumn. It's the inky winter nights, though, that provide the perfect canvas for the northern lights.

The final approach to Aurora Safari Camp is by snug snowmobile sleigh, a ride that skims us across the frozen Rane River. Tucked into the trees on the edge of a lake are five *lavvu* tents (the Sami version of tipis) and an open fire with seating covered in reindeer hides. As the sun surrenders to the Milky Way, we sit amid tall tree trunks, drink hot lingonberry juice and cold Champagne, and snack on cured meat and cheese. After a dinner of seared salmon and homemade ice cream in the lounge tent, we put on an extra layer of clothing and steal down to the ice, hopeful for an aurora display.

As if on cue, a sprinkling of pale dust appears to curl above the horizon. Fredrik takes a photograph that instantly reveals a lurid green streak across the sky. 'Good timing,' he says. 'It's starting now.' Charged particles from

the sun, borne on the back of solar winds, are colliding with gaseous particles in the earth's atmosphere and here, close to magnetic north, the performances are often powerful. Languidly, the dust takes on discernible shapes - curtains,

ABOVE The *aurora borealis*, also known as the northern lights, are named after a Roman goddess.

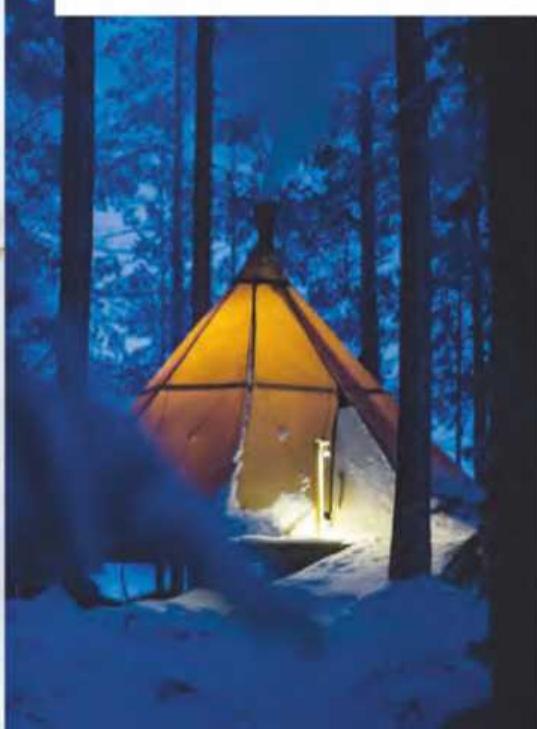
They're most prolific at night during winter, in the Lapland areas of Sweden, Finland and Norway





THIS PAGE ANTICLOCKWISE FROM TOP RIGHT

Richard Karlsson and his team of 10 Siberian huskies. The Mirrorcube room at Treehotel. The winter wonderland landscape of Lapland. A woman from the Sami people wearing traditional clothing. One of the tents in the Aurora Safari Camp, which is situated on the edge of a lake



ribbons and a musical clef. Hours later, in my toasty warm tent, I sleep soundly, having ticked off one of the world's greatest phenomena.

The next day is crisp and bright. After we have breakfasted on Swedish bacon and scrambled eggs, our wintry escapades include ice sculpting, snowmobile driving and riding on bikes with fat wheels specially designed for snow. As the sun begins to dip, I'm scooted by snowmobile sleigh for the next chapter of my adventure.

In a forest clearing stands Richard Karlsson, a bushy-bearded dog sledder. His team of 10 stunning Siberian huskies are harnessed in pairs ahead of a sled. Richard stands at the back, a spiked metal brake between his feet to keep the dogs, who are raring to go, in place. Brake released, Richard calls 'Yip!' and the dogs tear ahead with tremendous energy - these blue-eyed creatures can apparently run for up to 14 hours without tiring. It's an exhilarating rush as we speed through birch forests glowing golden in the sunset. Richard calls out to me that we're 'Arctic sailing'.

The final chapter of this Lapland tale takes me to the Treehotel. I check into the UFO room and gawp as the retractable staircase slowly descends to allow me into my silver spaceship suspended in the trees. Every room here - be it the Bird's Nest or the Mirrorcube - inspires wonder and delight. The charming owner, Kent Lindvall, accepts the Treehotel's enduring popularity with some bemusement.

Before I depart, Kent takes me by snowmobile to the top of a mountain for a delectable lunch of Arctic char, a cold-water fish, cooked on an open fire. The epic view is the side order I've come to expect from Swedish Lapland: food for the soul from the ultimate storybook for all ages □

ways and means

Stephanie travelled as a guest of Original Travel (020-7978 7333; originaltravel.co.uk). A four-night trip to Swedish Lapland costs from £2,150 per person, including two nights at the Aurora Safari Camp, full-board, and two nights in a Treehotel tree house, half-board, including flights, transfers and activities (dog sledding, snowshoeing and snowmobiling).

NEXT MONTH IN HOUSE & GARDEN

A STYLISH WEST
LONDON HOUSE BY
RABIH HAGE

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CERAMICS IN
STOKE-ON-TRENT

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SHOPPING, DESIGN AND ART

Nowhere beats Los Angeles for shopping. It's teeming with great fashion and design stores, plus some of the world's best art galleries. I love **Apolis: Common Gallery** (apolisglobal.com) for men's clothing and accessories. It's in Little Tokyo and is socially progressive and community minded. Jump in your car - a must in LA - and drive for 20 minutes west to Culver City. Here you will find **Arcana: Books on the Arts** (arcanabooks.com) owned by Lee Kaplan. It is the Holy Grail for art and design lovers. Lee and his staff are very helpful and well informed; they frequently build art libraries for collectors. Also in Culver City, check out **Obsolete** (obsoleteinc.com) for great design. The owner, Ray Azoulay, has a unique take on the world of art and antiques. His dramatic installations at times verge on the macabre. Head a little further east to visit a true LA institution. British-born interior designer **Kathryn M Ireland** (kathrynlireland.com) can take a 1,000-square-metre house from ground zero to gorgeous in record-breaking time. Her fabric collection alone makes her showroom worth a visit. British gallerist **Honor Fraser** (honorfraser.com) exhibits dynamic artists from KAWS to Kenneth Noland and everything in between. The gallery is in an area brimming with edgy galleries, including the prestigious **Blum & Poe** space (blumandpoe.com). A little further along South La Cienega Boulevard is **Edward Cella Art & Architecture** (edwardcella.com); here you can see beautiful modernist furniture, along with work from cutting-edge contemporary artists.

One of the few major galleries in LA with free admission is the **Hammer Museum** (hammer.ucla.edu), which has a brilliantly diverse programme. Head for the coast and you'll reach Venice. The waterfront is fringed with palm trees and this is one of the few places in Los Angeles where walking or cycling are the best options. Abbot Kinney Boulevard has some of the city's best boutiques. **LFrank** (lfrankjewelry.com) is where the most style-conscious women of LA flock. Nearby is **Chariots on Fire** (chariotsonfire.com), where the accessories and jewellery are sourced with care by owner Ritz Yagi, a graduate of Central Saint Martins. I particularly like the wonderful Japanese ceramics by Makoto Kagoshima.

ANTICLOCKWISE FROM
RIGHT Kathryn M Ireland's
showroom. The Ace
Hotel's reception.
The bar at Son of a
Gun. The LFrank store
sells distinctive jewellery
(centre left). Honor
Fraser's gallery
in West Hollywood



FROM FAR LEFT
Christopher Farr.
A bag from Apolis:
Common Gallery.
Los Angeles is
known for its
beach life. A
diamond elephant
ring from LFrank

ask a local LOS ANGELES

TEXTILE DESIGNER AND RUG MAKER **CHRISTOPHER FARR** REVEALS THE BEST PLACES TO SHOP, AND WHERE TO STOP FOR A BITE TO EAT, IN THE CITY HE HOLDS DEAR

PHOTOGRAPHS LISA CORSON



FOOD AND DRINK

Gjusta (gjusta.com) on Sunset Avenue is so achingly trendy that I barely dare set foot in there, but it makes such good coffee, cakes and sandwiches that it's hard to stay away. A couple of blocks away is **Moon Juice** (moonjuiceshop.com), where they make healthy drinks that are also seriously delicious. If you're in Venice, **Superba Food + Bread** (superbafoodandbread.com) is great for people watching - it serves healthy, locally sourced food with good beer. Away from the coast, in West Hollywood, is **Son of a Gun** (sonofagunrestaurant.com).

Order lots of small dishes - the seafood is especially delicious - so that way you'll get a chance to try everything.

ACCOMMODATION

The **Ace Hotel** (acehotel.com) is a great place from which to explore downtown. Designed by Commune Design, it has a young, style-conscious feel that is both subtle and comfortable. Look out for great furniture by Michael Boyd, and make the most of the rooftop bar and pool. **House & Garden** flew to Los Angeles with Air New Zealand (0800-028 4149; airnewzealand.co.uk) □

SPA RETREATS

LAURA HOULDSWORTH HIGHLIGHTS SPAS THAT OFFER GIFT PACKAGES – PERFECT FOR YOUR CHRISTMAS LIST



GRACE BELGRAVIA

Where 11c West Halkin Street, SW1 (020-7235 8900; gracebelgravia.com)

The spa This women-only members' club is big on healthy living, with its coaches, medical centre, fitness studios and café. Its medical treatments are also available to non-members. **Gift idea** The 'Saving Grace' includes a Natura Bissé Detox-Facial, Grace Signature Massage, OFAT Hot Stone Manicure and Pedicure, and Natura Bissé Eye Recovery Balm, from £300.



GRAYSHOTT HEALTH SPA

Where Grayshott, Surrey (01428-602020; grayshottspa.com)

The spa For more than 50 years, Grayshott has provided a country retreat for those looking to improve their health and wellbeing.

Gift idea The 'G Spa Day' includes access to the sauna, steam room, exercise classes and pool, lunch, a walk in the grounds with the fitness team and a choice of any Band A treatment (listed on the website), from £105.



HOTEL CAFÉ ROYAL

Where 68 Regent Street, W1 (020-7406 3360; hotelcafroyal.com)

The spa The hotel's Akasha Holistic Wellbeing Centre houses London's first Watsu pool, where bathers can enjoy massage, joint mobilisation, stretch, shiatsu and dance sessions.

Gift idea 'Mind, Body and Soul' includes a holistic facial, personalised massage, pedicure, access to the sauna, steam room, Jacuzzi and swimming pool, and lunch, from £320.



MANDARIN ORIENTAL HYDE PARK

Where 66 Knightsbridge, SW1 (020-7235 2000; mandarinoriental.com)

The spa This London spa with pool and gym has a range of treatments including the Linda Meredith Haute Couture Facial with Oxygen, £220.

Gift idea The 'Mandarin Oriental Experience' lasts about three hours and features a Warming Foot Ritual, Mandarin Oriental Spa Therapies and Utopia Anti-Ageing Facial, from £325.



THE BERKELEY

Where Wilton Place, SW1 (020-7201 1699; the-berkeley.co.uk)

The spa Known for its rooftop pool, with stunning views over Hyde Park and Knightsbridge, the Berkeley Health Club and Spa offers a range of Bamford Haybarn treatments.

Gift idea 'The Berkeley Rooftop Retreat' includes a Bamford Jade Hot and Cold Stone Treatment or Bamford Body Signature Treatment, a Mini Manicure and Pedicure, Signature Oskia Glow Facial, access to the gym and pool, and lunch, from £350.



HAM YARD HOTEL

Where 1 Ham Yard, W1 (020-3642 2000; firmdalehotels.com)

The spa Soholistic Body and Beauty at this hotel in Soho has a Hypoxic Studio, where you train in thinned air, which makes your workout harder and improves your fitness, recovery and rehabilitation.

Gift idea The 'Recharge Package' includes an intensive 30-minute personal training session in the Hypoxic Studio, a Liz Earle Superskin Botanical Lift Facial and a Liz Earle gift, from £195.



ALEXANDER HOUSE HOTEL & UTOPIA SPA

Where Turners Hill, West Sussex (01342-714914; alexanderhotels.co.uk)

The spa At this five-star manor-house hotel, the Utopia Spa has indoor and outdoor hydrotherapy pools, and waiter service to your hot tub on the new terrace in the Zen Spa Garden.

Gift idea The 'Awaken Spa Day' includes use of the subterranean spa facilities, a two-course lunch or afternoon tea and £140 to spend on your choice of treatments, from £210.



FOUR SEASONS HOTEL LONDON AT PARK LANE

Where Hamilton Place, London, W1 (020-7499 0888; fourseasons.com)

The spa This rooftop sanctuary has treatment rooms bathed in natural light from floor-to-ceiling windows, private relaxation pods and views over Hyde Park.

Gift Idea The 'Champagne and Diamond' package includes an Omorovicza Blue Diamond Facial and Golden Body Glow, use of the thermal facilities and a spa bento lunch box with Champagne, from £475.

at-home spa

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& GARDEN**



Hand-painted glass baubles, £35 for a set of 4, from The Conran Shop. For further inspiration, see 'Notebook'

STOCKISTS

Merchandise from these companies is featured editorially in this issue. Information is checked at the time of going to press, but *House & Garden* cannot guarantee that prices will not change or items will be in stock at the time of publication.

A-B

ABBOTT & BOYD 020-7351 9985; abbottandboyd.co.uk
ABLE LABELS 0844-371 2423; able-labels.co.uk
ACHILLEA FLOWERS 020-7431 1727; achilleaflowers.com
ANTHROPOLOGIE anthropologie.eu
APPLEY HOARE 020-7351 5206; appleynoare.com
BROSTE COPENHAGEN brostecopenhagen.com

C-D

C&C MILANO 020-3583 3303; cec-milano.com
CALICO WALLPAPER calicowallpaper.com
THE CAMBRIDGE SATCHEL COMPANY 01223-833050; cambridgesatchel.com
CASAMANCE 0844-369 0104; casamance.com
CERAMICA BLUE 020-7727 0288; ceramicablue.co.uk
CHRISTIAN FISCHBACHER fischbacher.com
CHRISTOPHER FARR CLOTH 020-7349 0888; christopherfarrcloth.com
CITY CO SEALS 020-8986 6125; citycoseals.co.uk
COLEFAX AND FOWLER 020-8874 6484; colefax.com

CONFETTI MASTER 0800-566 8201; confettimaster.com

THE CONRAN SHOP 0844-848 4000; conranshop.co.uk

CONTEMPORARY

CERAMICS CENTRE 020-7242 9644; cpaceramics.com

COX & COX 0844-858 0744; coxandcox.co.uk

DARKROOM 020-7831 7244; darkroomlondon.com

DAVID MELLOR 020-7730 4259; davidmellordesign.com

DESIGNERS GUILD 020-7893 7400; designersguild.com

E-F

EDIT58 edit58.com

FARROW & BALL 01202-876141; farrow-ball.com

FINE CELL WORK 020-7931 9998; finecellwork.co.uk

FOX LINTON 020-7368 7700; foxlinton.com

THE GOOD SHELF COMPANY 01491-628212; thegoodshelfcompany.co.uk

GUBI gubi.dk

HARLEQUIN harlequin.uk.com

HILARY BATSTONE 020-7730 5335; hilarybatstone.com

HOBBYCRAFT 0330-026 1400; hobbycraft.co.uk

HOWE AT 36 BOURNE STREET 020-7730 7991; 36bournestreet.com

I-J

JOHN JULIAN 01722-744805; johnjulian.co.uk

JONATHAN ADLER 020-7589 9563; uk.jonathanadler.com

JUSTIN VAN BREDA 020-7349 7089; j-v-b.com

K-L

KILNER 0151-486 1888; kilnerjar.co.uk

LABOUR AND WAIT 020-7729 6253; labourandwait.co.uk

LA CERISE SUR LE GATEAU lacerisesurlegateau.fr

LASSCO 020-7394 2100; lassco.co.uk

THE LETTEROOM 01264-355488; theletteroom.com

LIBERTY 020-7734 1234; liberty.co.uk

LIGHTS4FUN 01423-816040; lights4fun.co.uk

THE LINEN WORKS 020-3744 1020; thelineworks.co.uk

LIVELY livingly-design.dk

LUNA & CURIOUS 020-3222 0034; lunaandcurious.com

M-N

NATIVE & CO 020-7243 0418; nativeandco.com

NEPTUNE 01793-427427; neptune.com

THE NEW CRAFTSMEN 020-7148 3190; thenewcraftsmen.com

O-P

OKA 0844-815 7380; okadirect.com

THE ORIGINAL POP UP SHOP 07967-344057; theoriginalpopupshop.com

PAPERCHASE 020-7467 6200; paperchase.co.uk

PILLO pillolondon.com

PINCH 020-7622 5075; pinchdesign.com

POLAR POST 07817-977530; polarpost.co.uk

POOKY 020-7351 3003; pooky.com

PUCKHABER 020-3304 7327; puckhaberdecorativeantiques.com

Q-R

QUINDRY 07958-517017; quindry.net

RALPH LAUREN HOME 020-7535 4600; ralphlauren.co.uk

RE 01434-634567; re-foundobjects.com

REDLOH HOUSE FABRICS

020-7371 7787; redlohhousefabrics.com

ROCKETT ST GEORGE 01444-253391; rockettstgeorge.co.uk

ROCOCO CHOCOLATES 020-3691 5719; rococochocolates.com

ROMO 01623-756699; romo.com

S-T

SCP 020-7739 1869; scp.co.uk

SHEPHERDS 020-7233 9999; store.bookbinding.co.uk

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SMYTHSON 0845-873 2435; smythson.com

SUSAN DELISS susandeliss.com

TALKING TABLES 020-7627 6767; talkingtables.co.uk

TIGER tigerstores.co.uk

TISSUS D'HELENE 020-7352 9977; tissusdhelene.co.uk

TOAST toa.st

U-V

VIADUCT 020-7278 8456; viaduct.co.uk

THE VINTAGE KITCHEN STORE thenvintagekitchenstore.co.uk

VOLGA LINEN 01728-635020; volgalinen.co.uk

'SUGAR, SPICE & ALL THINGS NICE' TABLEWARE INFORMATION

Tomatoes, mustard and rillettes Glass jars: top right, 500ml, £3.50; top left, 250ml, £1.99; bottom, 350ml, £3.99; from Kilner. Stoneware plate, 13cm, £14.50, from Ceramica Blue. Stoneware pestle and mortar, £32, and jug, £19, both by John Leach; and horn spoon, £11.50; all from David Mellor. Reclaimed timber 'Victorian back-to-back' planks (as shelves), £57.60 a square metre, from Lassco. Pressed-metal decorations, £4 each, from RE. **Sablés, pâté and jam** Stoneware dish, 14cm, £37; square stoneware bowl, 11cm, £55; both from Ceramica Blue. Glass jar, 350ml, £3.99, from Kilner. Horn spoon, as before. **Salmon** Vintage knife, £85, from Appley Hoare. **Vodka and muffin mix** Glass bottle, 850ml, £5.99, from Kilner. Vintage storage jar, £3.50, from The Vintage Kitchen Store. Pressed metal garland, £11, from RE. Timber planks, as before. **Hot chocolate and truffles** Stoneware mugs, from £27 each, from Contemporary Ceramics Centre. Glass jar, 250ml, £2, from Kilner. Horn and bone spoon, £8.80, from David Mellor □



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1. IVAR is a London-based design brand with a confident yet effortless look. Their love for watches and F1 has inspired a line of handmade watch boxes using fine veneers. The illustrated Monaco Watch Box features an abstraction of the Monaco F1 grid and has a mood lighting function. Discover more at www.ivarlondon.com or call 020 7584 2887.

2. The Daphne Signature Black by **DU MAURIER WATCHES**. Part of a limited edition of just 300 pieces, this striking, Swiss-made watch will take you from day to evening effortlessly. The Daphne's jet black face and black lizard strap are offset by the slim, elegant, gold case. See the full collection at www.dumaurierwatches.com or call 0845 519 3074 for more details.

3. Designer jeweller and silversmith **LIZ TYLER** creates beautiful pieces always with a sense of movement in the flow of the design. Liz will be exhibiting at Desire, Winchester, 6-8th November 2015 and Craft in Focus, Richmond, London 13-15th November 2015. For more information, visit www.liztyler.com call 01258 820222 and email liztyler@mac.com

4. COBRA & BELLAMY make affordable, classically designed watches conveying timeless elegance. Pictured is the Hunter watch at £99, retro in style reminiscent of the 1960's. Its square face comes in a white or antique finish with a second hand set in a stainless steel case. Here is a quote from Sienna Miller who wore the Hunter watch when she was a guest on Top Gear "Cobra & Bellamy watches are classic, beautiful and affordable, I love all of them". To see the whole Cobra & Bellamy watch collection, visit www.cobrabellamywatches.co.uk or call 01736 732112 for further information.

5. Venture down the rabbit hole and discover **THE ALICE BOUTIQUE**. Quirky Alice In Wonderland inspired gifts from the bone china tea set and dinnerware to cushions, candles and stationery. Visit www.thealiceboutique.com or call 07583 109808 to find out more, 'You'd be as Mad as a Hatter not to!'

6. This beautiful pair of earrings is part of a collection of jewellery by **OTTOMANIA**. Beautiful handmade jewellery made of gemstones, 14K gold-fill, 9K gold and Sterling silver. The materials and colour combinations make this collection unique and elegant. Visit www.ottomania.nl for more details or call +31 23 737 04 26. Also available wholesale.

7. Vintage watch movement cufflinks by **PRETTY ECCENTRIC**. Crafted from 1920s-1950s watch movements, set with their original ruby jewels, mounted as cufflinks and presented in a vintage inspired box £49. To find out more, visit www.prettyeccentric.co.uk or call 07870 607925.

8. THE CANDLE COMPANY produces luxury fragranced products in a range of beautiful scents. Using only the finest, natural, sustainable ingredients ensures that everything from their premium candles and diffusers to the room spray colognes, hand wash and body lotions are of the highest quality. For more information, visit www.candleco.co.uk call 01981 570777 or email info@candleco.co.uk

9. DIANA PORTER CONTEMPORARY JEWELLERY. British jewellery designer, Diana Porter, specialises in beautifully handcrafted, unique pieces. Diana works to commission, creating one off designs, hand etching customers own words onto the jewellery and re-working clients existing pieces. Call 01179 090225, email web@dianaporter.co.uk or visit www.dianaporter.co.uk for more information.

10. Need a Christmas gift that tells the lady in your life just how truly special she is? Then look no further than **SOFFIA B** luxury silk dressing gowns. Two limited edition collections uniquely lined with soft, sensual cotton featuring different finishes depending on your climate. Brushed cotton for cooler climates and feather light sea island cotton for warmer environments. Hand stitched in New York and designed by a Brit, these robes make a beautiful accompaniment to any bedroom, sizing comes in XS, S, M and L. A variety of eleven different colour combinations and prints, find them at www.soffiab.com/HG and receive complimentary UK shipping.

11. SCULPSTEEL. Bring the magic of Christmas to life and delight the children with the tale of finding Rudolph's Flying Shoe in your garden, proof indeed that Father Christmas has visited. Available in standard black wax, natural rust or cream. A hook at the bottom enables you to hang items from it e.g. Christmas stockings or cards. It has holes so it can be hung on a door or wall. Approximately 20cm x 10cm, £20 inc P&P to mainland UK. To order, visit www.sculpsteel.co.uk call 01653 648033 or email workshop@sculpsteel.co.uk

12. LACORINE's exquisite alpaca designs use ethically sourced fur from Peru – The ultimate in luxury and a must for every stylish wardrobe. To find out more, call 020 8777 7534 or visit www.lacorine.co.uk or Stand H59 at the Spirit of Christmas.

13. DAVID AUSTIN's English Roses combine the delicate charm and wonderful fragrances of the old roses with the wider colour range and repeat flowering nature of modern roses. Save 15% when you order David Austin's fragrant English Roses by December 31st 2015, quoting code HOU56. Visit www.davidaustinroses.com or call 01902 376300 for details.



14. WATCH AGENCY specialise in buying, selling and servicing. They sell new, ex-display and pre-owned watches by world leading brands, including Rolex, Cartier, Patek Philippe, Breitling, and more. Pictured 1. ROLEX DATEJUST 178274 – RRP £7950 New £6000. With prices starting at less than half price of retail, contact them by calling 01702 395100 or visiting www.watchagency.co.uk for more information. They also supply jewellery at discount prices.

15. TUTTABANKEM offer a range of elegant silk velvet and cruising cotton kaftans, tops and cotton nighties – the perfect gift for yourself or your loved one. Visit them at www.tuttabankem.com or call for a free catalogue on 01572 717332.

16. SANDY BAY LONDON is a stunning collection of UK manufactured home fragrance. With fragrances ranging from melodious florals to seductive musk this stylish brand will add a silent designer element to your home. A collection for both men and women to enjoy. See them at Spirit of Christmas, Stand H53, visit www.sandbaylondon.com or call 01992 618015 to find out more.

17. BLUE VELVET, the home of contemporary and luxury footwear, direct from the heart of Europe. Always one step ahead, they have established themselves on their quality and first-rate service. Buy online at www.bluevelvetshoes.com visit them at 174 Kings Road, London, SW3 4UP or call 020 7376 7442 to find out more.

The Perfect Vintage...



1. ON REFLECTION MIRRORS offer a wide selection of beautiful, original, antique and vintage mirrors, including many Venetian mirrors, which you can see at www.antiquemirrors.co.uk. They regularly exhibit at the Battersea Decorative Fair, London, or to see all available stock, visit their showroom any time on the Somerset/Dorset border. Open by appointment only. Call 01963 220723 or email info@on-reflection.co.uk

2. Skandi Chic at OYSTER CATCHER INTERIORS! Find beautiful Swedish Gustavian antiques, luxurious soft mohair throws from Finland, Icelandic sheep skins alongside reindeer and cow hides, gorgeous ceramics, lamps, aged Italian leather furniture, Dash and Albert rugs, Culinary Concepts, bespoke chaise longues and a new 'Baltic Basket' addition to their stunning collection! To see more shabby chic pieces, visit www.oystercatcherinteriors.com or call 01823 336686.

3. ARIGHI BIANCHI a unique family furniture shop with a reputation for inspiring pieces, quality, service and value. Shop online at www.arighibianchi.co.uk or make a day of it at their iconic Grade II listed building in Macclesfield – just over the road from the mainline train station. Call 01625 613333.

4. QUIRKITUDINOUS. Looking for decorative or unusual pieces for your own home, or searching for the perfect present? Christmas shopping? Preferring to go "off liste" for a wedding present, just wanting something to brighten your day or liven up your house? You'll always find something quirky and amusing at Quirkitudinous! To see their ever-growing collection visit www.quirkitudinous.co.uk or call 07818 403494 for more information. Quote H&G to receive a 5% discount. Offer ends 30/11/2015.

5. SALISBURY ANTIQUES presents this early George III mahogany chest on chest with slide of fine quality and colour circa 1760, a fantastic new addition to Salisbury Antiques, £4,250. To find out more, call 01722 410634 or visit www.salisburyantiquescentre.com

6. A magnificent artcase Steinway boudoir grand that has been Reborn by 1066 PIANOS. With a beautifully restored original antique case and a hand built new interior. 1066 Pianos are a family business, now in third generation, who have been the trusted suppliers of the world's finest pianos for more than 40 years. Visit www.1066pianos.com or call 01223 881691 to arrange your exclusive preview of The 1066 Piano Collection.

7. INDIGO ANTIQUES specialise in Eastern antique furniture and decorative arts from India, China, Japan and Tibet. For over 35 years they have been carefully selecting furniture, gifts and accessories for their wonderful showroom in Wiltshire. You can now purchase items through their online shop at www.indigo-uk.com. Visit the showroom at Dairy Barn, Manningford Bruce, Pewsey, Wiltshire SN9 6JW or call 01672 564722. Pictured is a Tibetan altar cabinet with original painting, circa 19th century.

8. ALEXANDER & PEARL's online boutique offers a range of industrial chic and modern furniture and lighting. Whether you are looking for a statement piece or stunning lights to illuminate your home, they have pieces to suit stylish tastes. Pictured is the fabulous Carlotta Decorative French Gold mirror. Visit www.alexanderandpearl.co.uk email mail@alexanderandpearl.co.uk or call 020 8508 0411 for more information.

9. SCUMBLE GOOSIE hand make, in solid hardwood, a wide range of furniture, including these beautifully simple Gustavian style sleigh beds. All available in raw wood or they will paint your items in a colour of your choosing. They will also customise pieces to your size and design requirements. Visit www.scumblegoosie.com or call 01453 731305 for a brochure.

10. Guaranteed to draw the attention it deserves, SECOLARI & CO present the best of the 1970's in this glass top coffee table, a very unique piece. For more information, visit www.secolarilandco.com or call 01273 472042.

11. OVERMANTEL'S antique mirrors bring the heart back into the home. A stunning focal point for family gatherings and now you can even watch Christmas movies from your mirror! How is that for a dazzling idea? Find out more at www.mirrors.co.uk or call 020 7223 8151.

Beautifully Bespoke...



1. CHEEKY MONKEY TREEHOUSES specialise in the design and build of bespoke tree houses to complement your garden perfectly. They can also undertake European and worldwide commissions. Visit www.cheekymonkeytreehouses.com or call 01403 732452 for more information.

2. ACRES FARM have been manufacturing bespoke club fenders for over 30 years. Their fenders come in a wide range of designs and finishes: brass; bronze; brushed, polished or painted steel; copper; wood, or any combination of these. To find out more, visit www.acresfarm.co.uk or call 01189 744305. Prices from £940+VAT. Trade enquiries welcome.

3. ANIMALS IN WIRE. Commission a handmade life-sized wire portrait of your favourite animal, beloved pet or fantastical beast. Made bespoke to your ideas these sturdy, rustproof sculptures are ideal outdoors or inside. Call Barry on 07951 039663 or visit www.animalsinwire.co.uk Still just time for Christmas orders!

4. ADAM WILLIAMS DESIGN patinated bronze furniture. Featured are the stunning Claremont console table, available in a variety of finishes and one of the exciting new range of mirrors being launched by Adam Williams Design, available in a range of sizes from 1m, finished in antique gold or gilded silver, inlaid with antique glass. Offered in bespoke dimensions, their tables and mirrors would be a desirable acquisition to either traditional or contemporary interiors. Call 01749 830505, email info@adamwilliamsdesign.co.uk or visit www.adamwilliamsdesign.co.uk to view the complete collection.

5. BALMAIN & BALMAIN are makers of upholstered sofas, chairs, armchairs and stools that specialise in unusual and bespoke pieces. Each piece is handmade to order by craftsmen using the best skills and materials. The sofas and chairs can be seen at their showroom near Hungerford in the Wiltshire Downs or by visiting the website www.balmainandbalmain.com Call Balmain and Balmain on 01672 870414 for more information.

6. THE WORKSHOP is a London-born Furniture Design Collective, and is the brainchild of architect Sebastian Mann of design agency Minale + Mann. The products acknowledge Mann's background in architecture and his obsession for specialist fabrication techniques. An emphasis on shape, texture and finishes makes up the refined industrial style. To find out more, visit www.theworkshop-mm.com or call 020 3735 6470.

7. TRUNK BESPOKE DOORS—Made to measure, external and internal fire rated doors in a variety of classic and modern styles. They provide a beautiful range of architrave and skirting to complete your joinery requirements. Doors start from £135+vat. Call 0800 470 3351 or visit www.trunkdoors.com to find out more.

8. THE DOUGLAS WATSON STUDIO offers high quality handmade and hand painted tiles using traditional techniques and a wide range of glazes, colours and styles, from historical and classical sources to original and contemporary designs. Panels and installations, for kitchens, bathrooms and fireplaces, are custom made for each client. For more information, call 01491 629960 or visit www.douglaswatsonstudio.co.uk

9. AMY REBER is a talented surface and textile designer based in the US. She has spent years perfecting her bold, authentic illustrations to create fresh, modern designs. Her latest fabric collection "Seafarer" released by Guildery is pictured here. For more information, visit www.amyreber.com or call +1 540 604 6851.

10. CHARLOTTE ROSE INTERIORS is an online store packed with modern, contemporary, country, bespoke and French style furnishings. If you are looking to re-vamp your home or just update a small room, Charlotte Rose has the answer. Pictured is their lovely 'White Bespoke Dining Table' £599.00. Visit www.charlotterosehome.com or call 01522 589073 for more information.

11. Paul Parry at BAD DOG DESIGNS is the creator of original bespoke Nixie clocks. Made from recycled or redundant vintage equipment with a Steampunk twist, Nixie tubes were the forerunner of the modern LED and LCD displays of today. For more information, visit www.bad-dog-designs.co.uk or call 07932 662303.

12. MELLOW DUCK offers bespoke upholstered furniture; footstools, pouffes and side-tables with a twist, all handcrafted in Yorkshire, with excellent customer reviews and a 5 star rating on Houzz. Choose the design you like, and the fabric you love, to create your own piece. Visit www.mellowduck.co.uk or call Helen on 0113 290 7942 to discuss your requirements.

13. PK VENEERING. Add a stylish touch to your home with these fabulous Wine Storage Cubes! Offering four different sizes, and with spaces for four to ten bottles, these cubes will suit every interior. The Veneers are available in walnut, oak, birdseye maple, cherry and burr walnut, other veneers on request, prices start at £185, including UK delivery. To find out more, call 01270 253460 or visit www.pkveneering.co.uk

14. MUMFORD & WOOD LTD. Add style to a room with high performance, BRE A+ rated, Energy Saving Trust listed bespoke timber windows and doors, in period and contemporary designs including stunning bi-fold doors, by Britain's leading sash window manufacturer Mumford & Wood. Products are made from engineered timber that won't warp, twist or stick. Visit their showrooms in London and Essex, their website www.mumfordwood.com or call 01621 818155 to find out more.

Deck The Halls...

1. DEJA OOH is the home of this beautiful range of handmade coat racks. Available in an array of designs and sizes including their latest addition, the personalised children's hook. Use it to hang a stocking on a bedroom door for that all important Christmas eve! For more information on this London based homeware company, visit www.dejaohfurniture.co.uk or contact 07870 203733.

2. W SITCH & CO. Working in the trade since 1776, the Sitch family moved to their current premises in the 1870s from where they continue to specialise in the reproduction and renovation of antique lighting, be it the repair, rewiring or renovation of your own light fitting, or by offering you one from their selection of thousands of antiques or one of their reproductions which are made on the premises following traditional techniques. For further information, visit them at 48 Berwick Street, London W1F 8JD, call 020 7437 3776, or browse www.wsitch.co.uk

3. VILLAPERDE creates handcrafted lighting, made in Italy for interiors throughout the world. The Manhattan murano wall light, is available in various sizes and 15 new murano colours. They offer a lighting consultancy service, enquire at their London showroom – 618-620 King's Road, London SW6 2DU, call 020 7610 9797 or visit their website www.villaperdeltd.com to find out more.

4. HOWARD CHAIRS are internationally renowned as makers of beautiful upholstered furniture. Each piece is painstakingly hand-sprung and stitched in their own workshop, using traditional methods and the best raw materials. Established in 1825, the fine attention-to-detail and craftsmanship will last for generations. Clients can select from their collection or they can make to your own specification. They also provide a soft furnishings service including drapes and walling. Call 020 7482 2156 or visit their showroom at 30-31 Lyme Street, London NW1 0EE. View their website at www.howardchairs.com or email info@howardchairs.com

5. THE RUG STORE specialise in a wide selection of new, old and antique Persian, Turkish, Caucasian and Turkman carpets. Various antique, old and new kilims are available. They also offer a professional hand-cleaning and restoration service. They buy old and antique carpets – even damaged rugs. Part-exchange and evaluations. Visit 312 Upper Richmond Road West, East Sheen, London SW14 7JN. Call/fax 020 8876 0070 email info@rugstoreonline.co.uk or view www.rugstoreonline.co.uk

6. DINING CHAIR COMPANY is dedicated to producing the highest quality dining chairs at competitive prices. Their chairs are made to order with your own choice of wood, fabric and trim. They offer a bespoke service, creating original designs where required. To find out more, visit www.diningchair.co.uk or contact them on 020 7259 0422.

7. MODECOR Add a sophisticated touch to your living room thanks to **MODECOR**. The company is offering readers a generous price for its iconic reproduction 1956 Charles Eames lounge chair and ottoman, reducing the price from £775 to just £550. This handsome chair is available in a choice of finishes including; palisander rosewood (pictured), oak plywood or walnut wood, as well as black (pictured), brown or white leather upholstery. To view the full range or to claim your offer, visit www.modecor.co.uk or call 020 3239 3902 and use code HOME7 before 31/12/2015. Whilst stocks last.

8. STUHL specialise in high quality, limited edition, handmade designer seating. All of their advertised products are in stock ready for delivery to your home or business. The Scandi inspired Oslo in Heather Grey with matching piping and button detailing (pictured) is part of their current collection and is available now for £219.99 with free UK mainland delivery. House & Garden readers can save 10% off their first order using code HG10. Call 0800 408 1497 or visit www.stuhl.uk to find out more.

9. MAZZARO HOME brings to you a wealth of new ideas for your home. From lighting and mirrors, to beds, console tables and tealights, backed up with unparalleled customer service. They look forward to welcoming you to their world. Shown is the Elf Chair in Teal £345, Aria Console table £459 and Tarifa Mirror £355. For more information, visit www.mazzarohome.com or call 03300 240379.

10. EDGE BEANBAGS are the creators of the stylish and practical Techbed Kindle and iPad stand. They are fast developing a loyal following thanks to the ingenuity and quality of their design. For more information and to see the full range, visit www.edgebeanbags.co.uk or call 01189 780042.

11. SOFAS & STUFF offer an elegant, supremely comfortable collection of very beautiful British handmade sofas, chairs and sofa beds that look far more expensive than their price tag. Traditional hardwood frames and sprung upholstery are guaranteed for life, delivery is 5 weeks and a no-quibble returns policy is reassuring. Be guided through a cornucopia of fabric options with friendly, expert advisers in rural barn showrooms and new city-centre locations. Buy online at www.sofasandstuff.com or call 08081 783211. Shown here is the Matlock Sofa in Varese Schiaparelli Velvet.



Deck The Halls... Continued



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12. HADDONSTONE is the UK's leading manufacturer of fine garden ornaments and architectural stonework in traditional, classical and contemporary styles. The new Young Athlete bust, £275, pictured, would make a charming addition to a garden or to an interior setting and makes an ideal gift. Inspirational catalogue available. To find out more, visit www.haddonstone.com or call 01604 770711.

13. DEVOL KITCHENS – Designers and makers of handmade English kitchen cupboards. They offer a selection of classic Georgian and Shaker painted furniture and the Air kitchen, a retro classic of the future. Their most recent addition, the highly acclaimed Sebastian Cox Kitchen by deVOL, is a unique urban rustic design. All deVOL furniture is made in their workshops in Leicestershire and can be viewed at Cotes Mill, a beautifully renovated watermill, or their new London showroom in Clerkenwell. Visit www.devolkitchens.co.uk or call 01509 261000 for more information.

14. PULLMAN EDITIONS designs, commissions and publishes striking original posters which capture the enduring appeal of Art Deco. Their newly commissioned posters feature winter sports, glamorous resorts around the world, and the world's greatest historic automobiles. All £395 each. Call 020 7730 0547 or view and buy online at www.pullmanteditions.com

15. LIZARD ORCHID. Woodland Pheasant-lightweight, extremely life-like woodland animals in a brushed silver finish. Each chosen for their beautifully natural poise. These statement pieces are a quirky addition to this year's Hunter Wolf theme and will add humour to the table when hosting and entertaining. Woodland Pheasant £49 and 36cm. For more information, visit www.lizardorchid.com or call 01403 791348.

16. REBECCA HARTLEY INTERIORS is a luxury interior design studio based in South West London. Her contemporary yet classic style is popular with both her private and commercial clients. Rebecca and her team are passionate about creating inspired but practical interiors. For more information, visit www.rebeccahartleyinteriors.com or call 020 8944 6803.



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grey and pale washed wood from **BLUE ISLE**'s online boutique collection, which also features stylish furniture and accessories. White weathered oak tables and beds are teamed with luxurious, crisp linen pieces and reclaimed wood and metal tables. Timeless style and affordable luxury. Lamps from £75. To find out more, visit www.blueisle.co.uk or call 01425 653031.

20. JASMINE SILK. A high thread count is not necessarily the last word in luxury contemporary linen. If you're mindful of your skin, it's the material you sleep on that matters. Pure mulberry silk pillowcase from Jasmine Silk has all the qualities you'd expect without the harmful toxins. Jasmine Silk's super-soft bedding and accessories are virtually guaranteed to leave your skin crease-free. To view the full collections, visit www.jasminesilk.com or call 01784 465408.

21. POTS AND PITHOI this festive season has an abundance of handmade gifts. Beautiful terracotta pots, antique vessels, ceramics, rugs, jewellery, knitwear, hammam towels, soaps and foods and much more. For more information, call 01342 714793, look online at www.potsandpithoi.com or visit them and enjoy a meal in their Mediterranean café before browsing in the courtyard and Medieval barns. Free parking.

22. MULTYORK. Made from the very finest quality wood, Multiyork's furniture collections are hand-finished to the highest standard. From stunning dining tables to upholstered dining chairs, stylish storage solutions and occasional tables, Multiyork have chosen pieces that work with their sofas and armchairs to create a beautifully coherent look. Call 03333 583325 or visit www.multyork.co.uk for more information.

23. Get your home ready for the festive season with a bespoke sofa or chair from **MULTIYORK**. With over 50 styles to choose from, each piece is hand made in Norfolk and is available in a wide choice of fabrics including designer ranges from high-street fashion brand Monsoon, Linwood and Sanderson as well as Multiyork's in-house Studio Collection. Call 03333 583325 or visit www.multiyork.co.uk for more information.



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24. Made from the very finest quality cherry wood, dining collections from **SWANKY INTERIORS** are hand-finished to the highest standard. From magnificent French display cabinets, stunning dining tables and upholstered dining chairs to the wide range of lighting and handwoven designer rugs; original designs for every room in the house, allow you to start small and build the look to suit you and your home. Buy online at www.swankyinteriors.co.uk or call 020 3397 4874 for more information.



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25. **COPPER DUST**, supported by The Prince's Trust, is a luxury home décor brand specialising in bespoke handmade lampshades. It is inspired by eclectic British and African culture infused together, giving a taste of the exotic, whilst remaining quintessentially British. Visit www.copperdustlondon.com to view the full collection or contact 020 3659 9913 to find out more.



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26. **ATLANTICO RUGS**. Exclusive pure wool handmade tapestry rugs. Each year they design and develop new patterns working along with the major interior designers to create the perfect rug for a room. A small selection of designs can be seen on the website but many more are available. Visit www.atlanticorugs.com email anne@atlanticorugs.com or call 020 8780 5288.



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27. **MAISON HARTLEY** brings sophisticated global influences together. This boutique home store has a showroom in St Albans and is often 'popping up' in places like Ascot! A full interior design service is offered. For more information, visit www.maisonhartley.com or call 01727 838226.



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28. **FELT**'s unique collection of rugs, floor cushions and cushions are handmade by the nomadic peoples of Kyrgyzstan. From dazzling and bright to elegant and subtle, they suit both traditional and contemporary interiors. Viewing by appointment in London SW12. Call 020 8772 0358 or visit www.feltrugs.co.uk to find out more.



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29. Traditional and contemporary fireguards and log holders handmade in Bath, Somerset by **GARDEN REQUISITES**. The large traditional fireguard size shown measures 107cms wide and costs £350. Optional side fixings and bespoke service available; nationwide and international deliveries. Call 01225 851577 or visit www.garden-requisites.co.uk



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30. **WELCHOME**. Ballroom table light, all in Murano glass. For information, visit www.welchome.co.uk or call 020 7610 9108.



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31. Kadai Firebowls by **WILSTONE**, Cook, keep warm and be merry! Their Winter offer: Recycled 70cm Kadai firebowl BBQ with grills, tongs, high and low stands, cooking tripod, cooking bowl and leather Kadai glove price £289 delivered FREE to any UK mainland address. The ideal Christmas gift for men, perfect to use as a firebowl, for all year round barbecuing and entertaining. Find over 30 Kadai accessories now available online from www.kadai.com or call 01694 771800. Fall in love with outdoor living!



Kadai FIREBOWLS

32. **LIMES & VINES** offer a beautiful range of glassware that will add style and individuality to your festive table. Their online store also offers a great selection of tablelinens, tableware and Scandinavian style furniture. For more information, visit www.limesandvines.co.uk or call 01920 413986.



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33. **REASON HOME** are inspired by the vibrancy and traditions of Indian textiles and works closely with skilled artisans to block-print by hand their exclusive designs onto natural fabrics. From stylised accent cushions to luxurious soft quilts and bathroom accessories, they have adapted classic Indian designs into exclusive, contemporary products for urban lives. For more information, visit www.reasonhome.co.uk or call 07740 102549.



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34. **MY SHE SHED**... not just a male domain. The ultimate retreat at the bottom of the garden with a suitably luxurious twist. Design your building with high quality materials, around your permitted development, to create a perfect oasis of calm, to write, paint or propagate! For more information, visit www.mysheshed.co.uk call 07765 190869 or email mysheshed@gmail.com



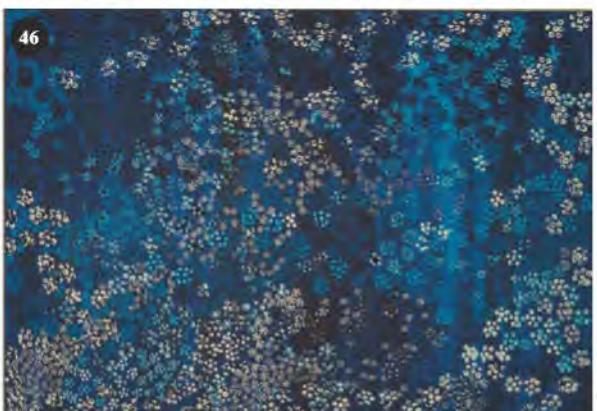
34

35. Since 1967, **DELCOR** has been flying the flag for British craftsmanship with designer made-to-measure sofas and chairs, made entirely in beautiful Northumberland. Every single Delcor sofa and chair is the definition of a masterpiece – that is, a piece handmade by a master craftsmen with over 20 years experience. If you want your chaise longue a little longer or your high back sofa a little lower, a deeper seat or a wider arm, Delcor will make it to your exact specification. Delcor offers a 50 year guarantee on all its pieces. Contact 01912 371303 or visit www.delcor.co.uk for more information and to find a list of their showrooms.



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Deck The Halls... Continued



36. ART REBELLION proudly presents Mini car furniture. Single/double seaters, Mini bars, Mini beds and Mini theatres created by award winning UK artist George Ioannou. For their extensive range of furniture and artworks, visit www.artrebellion.co.uk or call 020 8668 0007 to find out more.

37. SOMETHING DIFFERENT is a true treasure trove. It's full of eclectic and unique pieces sourced from around the world; one-off pieces of furniture, beautiful and colourful textiles, cushions made from vintage saris, unusual artefacts, wonderful jewellery and much more. Visit www.something-different.uk.com call 01730 858151 or visit their Midhurst shop.

38. SUSAN WASHINGTON FINE ART. Original large scale abstract paintings from an artist with an international following. Available works featured for sale securely through SaatchiArt or visit the artist's website for commission enquiries. Visit www.saatchiart.com/susanwashington or www.susanwashingtonfineart.com or call +1 570 242 5404 for more information.

39. OLD BOOT SOFAS, English handcrafted leather sofas. Chester starts from £1490, it's available in various colours and sizes, extremely comfy, exclusive leather with free UK delivery within two weeks. To receive £100 discount reducing the sofa to £1390, visit www.oldbootsofas.com or call 020 7736 3738 and use code HG10.

40. A PLACE IN THE GARDEN presents the new and traditional version of their popular Coach lamp, with prices starting from £185. For more information, call 01403 864866 or visit www.aplaceinthegarden.co.uk

41. AN ARTFUL LIFE offers an ever-evolving collection of homeware and gifts. The range includes on trend products by Danish brands like House Doctor as well as beautifully unique items by emerging designers. For more information, contact 07528 807292 or visit www.anartfullife.co.uk and use the code HG10 for an exclusive 10% discount, valid until 31 January 2016.

42. REVIVAL BEDS. Since 1983 every Revival bed has been handmade to order by master craftsmen in their workshops, using time honoured techniques. There are 18 bed designs in the collection, which are available in 11 different finishing options. Includes free delivery and installation by their own team. Request a brochure at www.revivalbeds.co.uk or call 01777 869 669 to find out more.

43. PAD LIFESTYLE. An online lifestyle collective offering many unique and inspiring home and fashion brands from across the world. With so many chic, curious and eclectic pieces to find - urban homewares from Copenhagen, Mid-century glamour from New York, Scandi design from Stockholm, unique table and glass wear from Paris

and Amsterdam, hand crafted furniture from Indonesia, vintage rugs from Berlin and stunning textiles from across the UK – it's definitely worth a look. Visit www.padlifestyle.com or call 0131 225 9012 for more information.

44. This Autumn, the **POOKY** people have added a fabulous new range of pendants in metalwork, blown glass and ceramics; and they've added desk lights and wall lights too! Just like their table and floor lamp brethren, the new range is as beautiful and affordable as ever. Everything is easily browsed at www.pooky.com and delivered free. Email hello@pooky.com or call them on 020 7351 3003 and their customer services team will help however they can.

45. ROBERT LANGFORD's exciting new range of "in stock" bedside tables are perfect for any scheme. See the full collection on their new "in stock" website. They are proud to be trusted by the world's best designers. To find out more, visit www.robertlangford.co.uk or call 020 7352 1876.

46. SIRENES – A Sublime Colorist Enamored of Light – presents her artwork "Mother Earth". Sirenes conveys an even more elusive subject by virtue of her mastery of chromatic dynamics as vibrant and yet gentle as the music of Ravel with a finesse that calls to mind the 19th century British painter J.M.V. Turner. Sirenes exhibited artwork at Regent Street Tube Station, London in October. Visit www.sirenes.no or e-mail post@sirenes.no or call +47 47889841.

47. THE STYLISH DOG COMPANY specialises in dog beds and dog accessories that complement your home. Choose from a wide range of luxury dog beds, handmade collars and leads, personalised dog bowls and a fun range of gifts for dog lovers this Christmas. Quote voucher code 'House10' at checkout for 10% off your first order. Visit www.thestylishdogcompany.com or call them on 01483 810036 for more information. Stylish living for dog and home.

48. BRABIN & FITZ have a beautiful collection of lighting, furniture and mirrors and offer bespoke commissions. Visit www.brabinandfitz.co.uk or call 01244 314838 to find out more.

49. This beautiful aromatic candle from SUMMERDOWN MINT captures the scent of the English countryside creating a clean, fresh and enchanting atmosphere in the home. Made from soy wax and using Summerdown's bespoke fragrance containing Black Mitcham mint and other essential oils. RRP £22.00. Visit www.summerdownmint.com or call 01256 780252 for more information.

50. COLLECTIVELY ARTISAN LTD specialise in beautifully hand crafted, vibrantly coloured ceramics. Featured is the "Lava" colour blend showing various unique designs. Quote "HG12" for 10% off your first order at www.collectivelyartisan.com or call 07540 840929, or visit their Bristol showroom.

51. FIRELIGHTING WITHOUT FUSS. The award winning Grenadier Electric Firelighter is guaranteed to light all types of solid fuels fast. No home with a traditional fire or stove should be without this modern firelighter. Order yours today at www.grenadier.co.uk or call 01829 741649.

52. PENROSE PRODUCTS produce luxury bedding and soft furnishings using Alpaca fibre. This rare wool produces some of the softest products and gives amazing comfort. The family run business uses sustainably sourced materials to hand make all of their products to the highest quality. For more information, visit www.penroseproducts.co.uk or call 0845 125 7222.

53. JONATHAN CHARLES creates urban chic with its new Camden Collection. Drawing on iconic European designs of the 1950s, Camden offers transitional furniture with a difference. To find out more, visit www.jonathancharles.com email london@jonathancharles.com or call 020 7351 9122.

54. CHARLOTTE GAISFORD LTD has just launched 'The Hermitage Collection' of digitally printed fabrics and wallpapers. The designs are based on a British and historical theme from an imperial past. The collection can be described as traditional with originality, incorporating classic and comfortable colours, which would suit any town or country residence. Visit www.charlottegaisford.co.uk or call 01434 689583 for free samples.

55. SPRINGVALE LEATHER have been manufacturing high quality furniture for almost 30 years. Their ranges can be made in any colour leather or fabric and all are supplied with a 10 year guarantee. For more information or to request a brochure call 01706 225005 or visit www.springvaleleather.co.uk

56. GLAZEBROOK & CO create quintessentially British silver and stainless steel cutlery to the highest quality. This delightful range is Old English mirror finish stainless steel with cream handled knives (dishwasher safe). Set of six at £300. To investigate, visit www.glazebrook.com or call 020 7731 7135.

57. Each pure cashmere throw, cushion and blanket from GILLIAN WEIR is soft and luxurious, with your preferred selection of colour, weave, weight and finish and no minimum order quantity. They really are the ultimate bespoke indulgence for any interior scheme. Visit www.gillianweir.co.uk or call 01943 467353 for more information.

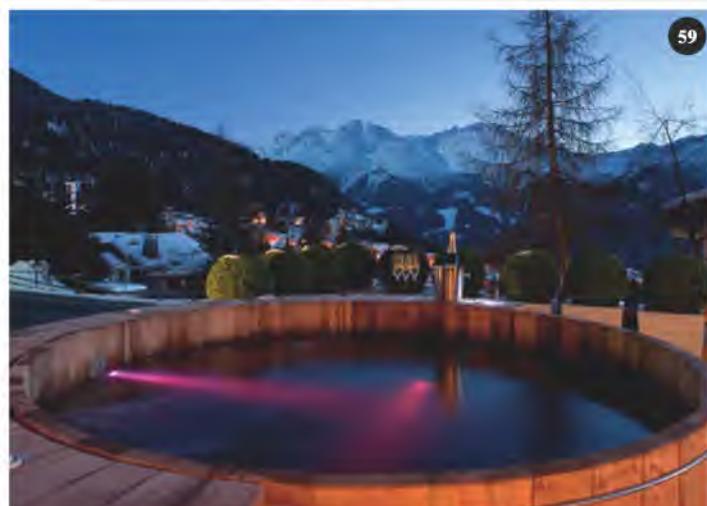
58. CAMERON DESIGN HOUSE was founded by designer Ian Cameron, who combines his Finnish heritage and London upbringing to create unique, contemporary and bespoke lighting. Handcrafted from their Primrose Hill (London) studio, Cameron Design House combines natural and man-made materials to create elegant pieces boasting strong sculptural aesthetics and conscientious design. To see more of their beautiful range, visit www.camerondesignhouse.com or call 07454 957240 for more information.

59. RIVIERA HOT TUBS offer a unique range of award winning cedar wood hot tubs, combining traditional cooperage methods with the latest spa technology. These hot tubs range from £5,995-£12,000. They install throughout Europe and worldwide. For further information or to request a brochure, visit www.riviera-hottubs.co.uk or call 01803 663709.

60. ORCHID is the UK's leading retailer of Oriental furniture, lamps and accessories available online and in its substantial Chelsea and Hampshire showrooms. Beautiful handmade furniture and restored antiques with masses of finishing touches for fabulous gift ideas or to transform your home. For inspiration, visit www.orchidfurniture.co.uk or call 020 7384 2443. Worldwide Delivery and bespoke services available.



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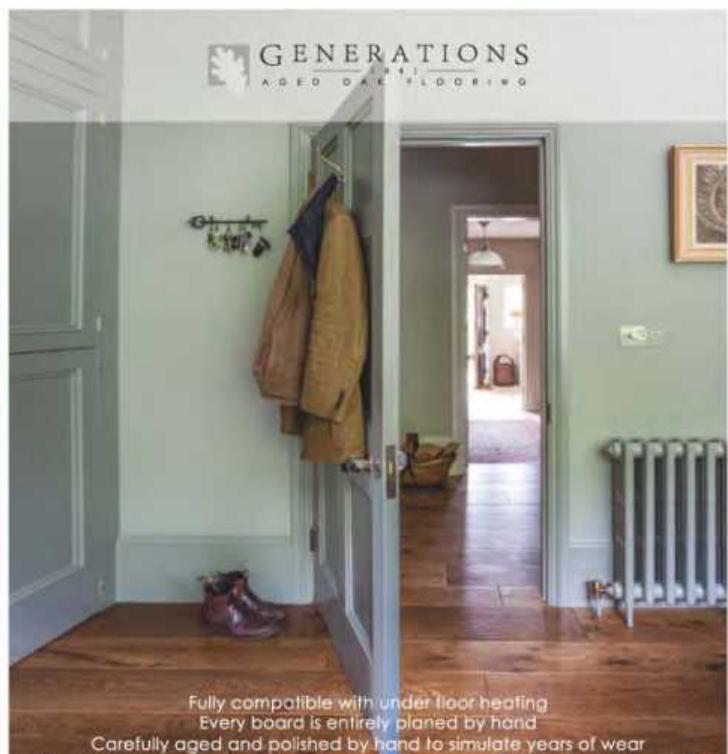
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Swallows and Amazons here we come!

Adventure, wildlife, glorious countryside and open views, vernacular and contemporary architecture, fantastic facilities and good old-fashioned family fun are Habitat First Group's hallmarks. It was founded by the late property entrepreneur Jeremy Paxton, who developed the UK's first residential nature reserve at Lower Mill Estate. Claire Pilton meets his son Red at the family's second scheme of sustainable homes in Dorset

It is absolutely bucketing with rain when Red Paxton drives up to the timber-clad sales office at Silverlake; but the weather really doesn't matter. With the huge expanse of empty sky, and the unexpected outlook over a lunar-like lake to forestry and fields beyond, it feels as though we're in the middle of nowhere.

In fact, Silverlake is just three miles from Ringstead Bay on the Jurassic Coast, five miles between Weymouth and Dorchester. It occupies the site of Warmwell's WWII airbase and a 100-year-old sand quarry. The holiday homes will cover less than a third of the land, with some 300 acres given over to providing a natural habitat for wildlife – and a natural playground for residents. Or rather second-homers, as property cannot be used as a primary residence at Silverlake, which is being developed along similar lines to the Paxton's Lower Mill Estate in the Cotswolds.

Red points to "the growing number of UK families who are fed up with or fearful of holidaying, half-terming and week-ending abroad." Families who, far from hankering after the barefoot luxury of long-haul destinations, are searching for what he describes as 'grounded luxury'.

"Our concept appeals to ordinary people who've worked hard and done well; who hire a chef for special occasions, but not all the time. Who want their children to explore the great outdoors and be able to play out of sight safely, to take part in bush-craft courses and night safaris. Today's youngsters aren't allowed to venture out alone, especially in towns. At Lower Mill they are encouraged to make their own tracks through the reserve and make their own memories too."

Around 70% of Lower Mill's 320 owners come from London; there are a handful of expats and a few out-and-out investors who are looking ahead



10 years when everything will be finished. The estate already sports a huge spa with Europe's first eco-pool, an organic farm and farm shop, and a clubhouse and restaurant that opened this summer; it has consent for 575 properties but, given the trend for double plots, is unlikely to reach that number. Red reports average plot prices are now £350,000 compared to £60,000 when his father launched the scheme 16 years ago.

A champion water skier, Jeremy Paxton went to coach in the USA where he stayed in gated holiday home communities. He introduced them to the UK back in the 1970s, a time when caravans and tents were the norm. Starting at the lode-on-the-back-of-a-lorry end of the market, he established Watermark (which still exists), extended it to four sites and sold the lot to acquire Lower Mill in 1996. Like Silverlake, it was a quarry pit with no planning: a shrewd gamble that paid off.

Having established there was scope in the UK for more Lower Mills, Paxton acquired the Silverlake site two years before his unexpected death in 2013. Red, who had worked at Habitat

First Group for seven years, took up the reins together with his sister Ruby, who heads the company's holiday rental arm, Habitat Escapes, and younger brother Rory, who joined the sales team this year. Having left school at 16, Red "never wanted to work for Dad. DJ-ing beckoned; marketing followed. Dad began asking my advice about marketing at Lower Mill and offered me a job during the recession. After selling 14 properties in six months, I re-negotiated my package and worked my way up to head of sales and marketing!"

"At Silverlake, we're taking Dad's eco-rooted ethos to the next level, introducing new energy-efficient designs and some serious holiday infrastructure." Tree-top walkways, zip wires, a climbing wall and huge play area, MUGA games and tennis courts are teamed with a secluded glade and hammocks, several beaches (there's no shortage of sand) and a dedicated spot for camp-fires beside a 1950s Airstream caravan. Three lakes for fishing and boating will be followed by canal-canoe safaris around 10 reclaimed islands (with 30 homes on each), a large health club

and restaurant, farm shop, bakery and a 50-room hotel and country club.

The first cluster of 31 properties at Beaumont Village includes 11 terraced cottages priced from £295,000 and six water-fronting properties that rise to £2.5 million. Purchasers can choose from 10 designs; alternatively one of Habitat First Group's existing designs can be modified, or an architect commissioned to create a new one. Recommended builders will then customise the layout and interior to the owner's specifications. "Basically it's self-build without the *Grand Designs* headaches," says Red, who sold 13 homes within four months of launching.

Red's championing of old-fashioned fun is refreshing and reflects his own family's values. "People who were growing up in the 1960s and 70s want to reconnect with their youth and see their children enjoy the same experiences." He and his siblings are proudly protective of the legacy their father left them and those like-minded families who wish to hide away in the depths of a flourishing residential nature reserve.

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CAPITAL COOL

Claire Pilton gets street smart in London's emerging hot spots



It is extraordinary to think that just 30 years ago in the Sloane Rangers' heyday, Kings Road, Parsons Green, Wandsworth Bridge Road and 'Batter-ci-a' were not only 'in', but also well within the budget of London's bright young things. Now the cool crowd is looking way beyond the perimeters of 'prime outer London' with first-time buyers, second steppers and young families aspiring to areas such as Ealing, Acton, Kensal Green, Queen's Park, Kilburn and Shepherd's Bush in the west, Earlsfield, Brixton, Peckham and Bermondsey in the south, and to the east: Whitechapel, Hoxton, Haggerston, Dalston, Stoke Newington and Clapton.



Hailed by *Vogue* as South London's coolest quarter after White Cube opened on Bermondsey Street, the £1 billion regeneration of the New Bermondsey area will include improved transport and world-class sports facilities. A brisk walk from the overground and tube, **Bermondsey Works** will provide 148 apartments above a primary school and sixth-form academy. Available through Telford Homes (01992 809800).

Hackney's headline scheme Warehaus (pictured) saw all 30 flats sold off-plan and off-market within four months. Now super-sassy Union Developments (0800 0432523) is about to release **143 Mare Street**, E8, a new-build, mixed-use scheme of 47 flats priced from £450,000. The 30,000 sq ft of cool commercial space will include a designer-restaurant with a courtyard cinema for pop-up events.

Fabrica's striking urban scheme of 327 apartments at **City Wharf** (0800 0833199) sits alongside the canal on Wenlock Basin near City Road, EC1. Well placed for the Old Street district, Shoreditch and Hoxton, it is also within walking distance of the City. With over a third sold, predominantly to owner-occupiers, prices in the second phase now start from £500,000.

‘A 30-acre park and proper café culture, boutique shops, great transport, a strong, long-term community... you can’t beat Queen’s Park,’ says Laura Dam Villena, who has lived here for 10 years and recently opened Knight Frank’s local office (020 3815 3020). ‘For young families in search of more space for their money, a three-bedroom

house on Tennyson Road, NW6, affords the opportunity to convert the loft and do the side return to create a substantial four-bedroom home. After 40 years, the owners are seeking £1.2 million. Alternatively on Carlisle Road, £2.25 million will secure a property where these works have been carried out.’



This picture and inset: a house on Carlisle Road in Queen’s Park

“Peckham’s popularity has exploded among young professionals,” says Jason Davis of Kinleigh Folkard & Hayward (020 3199 8071) who reports “a significant number of first-time buyers registering with budgets as high as £800,000.” The mix of bars, restaurants and coffee shops that have sprung up, together with the high streets

of Nunhead Lane and Queen’s Road and great overground links, make Peckham a worthy and more affordable alternative to areas such as Battersea, Clapham, Brixton and Herne Hill. Within a short walk of Nunhead, Peckham Rye and Queens Road stations is this six-bedroom house on Consort Road, SE15, on at £1.1 million.



Consort Road

High prices in Islington and Shoreditch have seen young professionals and families moving to the more affordable parts of Hackney, particularly Dalston and Stoke Newington. Restaurants, bars and independent shops are opening and property prices are rising. Hackney saw the highest increase in London for 2014/2015, reports Richard Everitt of Winkworth (020 8986 4216) who anticipates the borough’s popularity and price increases will spread to areas like Clapton – where this two-bedroom flat, on Clapton Square, costs £539,999.

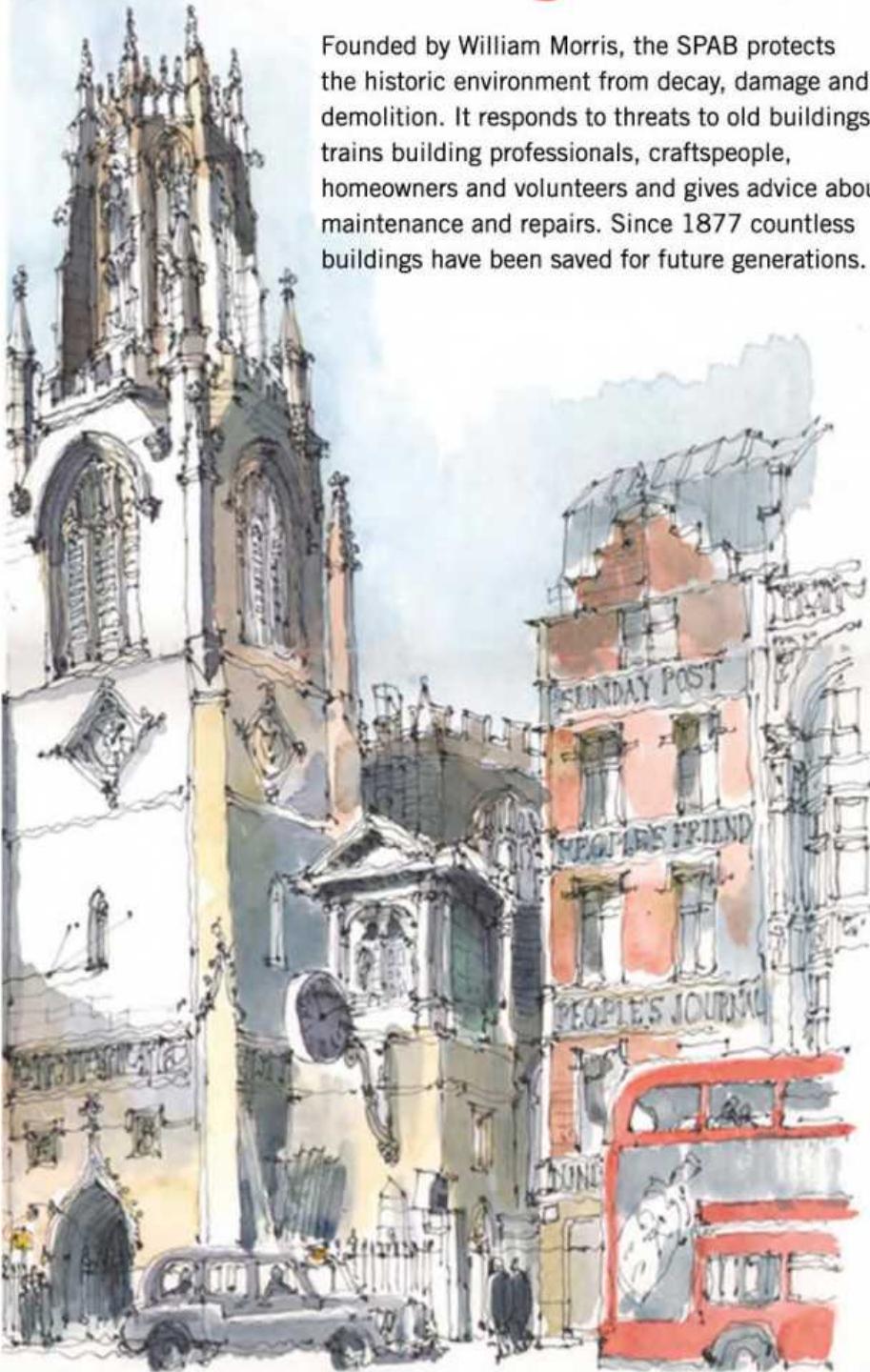


Clapton Square

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Drawing of St Dunstan-in-the-West by SPAB Scholar Ptolomy Dean

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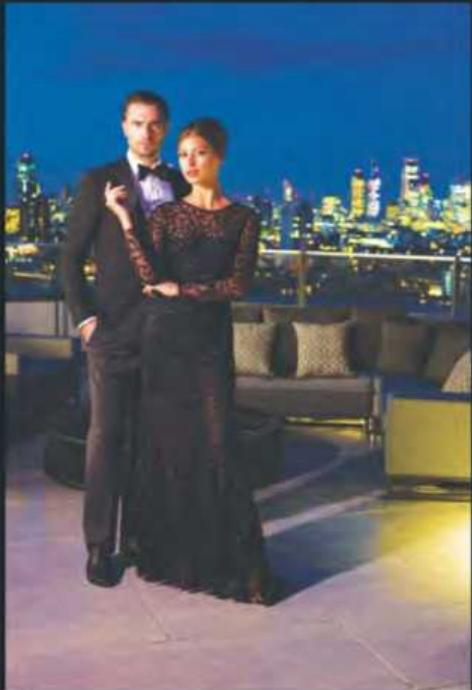
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The quality of both homes is apparent from the moment you enter, from the feature designer kitchens by Molteni & C with integrated Gaggenau and Miele appliances, the fully automated blinds and curtains, lighting, audio and visual, designer wardrobes to bedrooms, mood lighting and coffered ceilings in all rooms. Grandeur and opulence also abound within the bathroom suites, with beautiful textures of marble, porcelain and stone combining to showcase the top quality sanitaryware. All of these touches create apartments that are the very pinnacle of penthouse living.

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CHRISTMAS LIST

Make the most of the festive season with this merry medley, from colourful paintings to some extremely sophisticated Wendy houses. By *Rosemary Brooke*



MANSIONS IN MINIATURE

For the Christmas present to trump all Christmas presents – something, perhaps, for the wannabe architect in your family – check out Cornish-based Love Lane Caravans, which has brought out a new collection of tabernacles with the concept of 'Wendy houses for grown-ups'. They were previewed at this year's Goodwood Revival, and each one is modelled on a historic building – recent projects include a miniature version of a 19th-century Methodist chapel. 'We work with each customer to create something unique to them: we love nothing better than a 'crazy' idea, or a reflection of someone's roots – all mixed up with a flash of eccentricity,' says co-founder Anna Bingham. From £22,000. www.lovelane-caravans.com



Deck the halls

Brighten up someone's life with one of Milly Flamburiari's captivating paintings – the artist opens her new exhibition *Simple Pleasures* on 7 December at Gallery 8 on Duke Street in London's Mayfair. The show encompasses several varying groups of Flamburiari's work, each with a different style and subject. From Jazz Age scenes to geometric designs, Flamburiari's art is immersed in imagination and subtle humour: her colourful compositions will bring joy long after the festive season has ended. Prices range from £950–£2,400. Open daily from 7–12 December from 10.30am to 6.30pm, also by private appointment. Visit www.millyflamburiaripaintings.com or call 020 7937 7064/07885 410574



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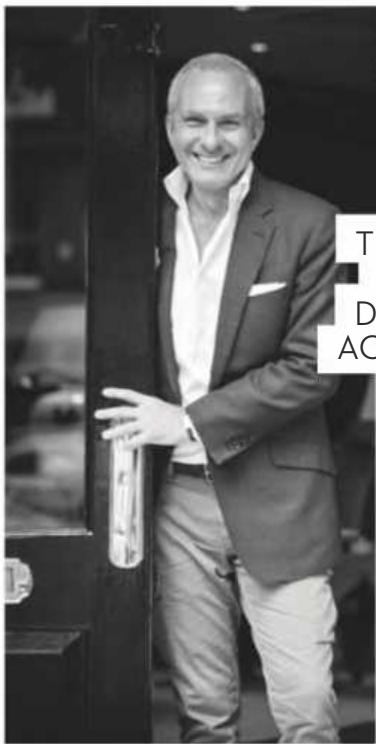


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2



1 Paolo's elegant Sussex farmhouse. 2 The bedroom of a Chelsea house he designed.

3 'Havana Lantern', £1,950, and 'Sphere' table lamp, £750, both from Paolo Moschino for Nicholas Haslam. 4 White walls and brown upholstery in a Kensington sitting room by Paolo. 5 Fabric from top: 'Treviso' (14), £135 for a metre; 'Hampton Stripe' (amber), £99 for a metre; 'Brittany Glazed Linen' (navy), £100 per metre; all from Paolo Moschino for Nicholas Haslam



5

Paolo Moschino

The Italian-born head of the Paolo Moschino for Nicholas Haslam design studio has a flair for understated chic in his interiors projects

Do make sure the bones are right first. Take time over the floors, mouldings and chimneypieces, so that you can relax about the rest, which can be easily changed (1). • **Eliminate 70 per cent of what you see when shopping for interiors, quickly and on instinct.** This will clear your visual memory and keep decision making unfretful. Just wait for something to smile at you.

• **Don't let rooms look overtly decorated.** The key is to relax; you need books, you need magazines, you even need dust! • **Bedrooms should be comfortable, airy and personal.** They are my favourite rooms to decorate. I adore beautiful bedlinen, and the fact that the space is decorated only for you (2). • **Have fun choosing lamps.** Lamps provide great opportunities for colour and scale, but they can also be fun, characterful and figurative. I rarely choose a serious lamp (3). • **If you collaborate well with someone, hold on to them.** The artist Dawn Reader does all our murals and paint finishes; sometimes we barely need to discuss things, as she understands me perfectly. • **Embrace white.** It is such a wonderful colour to contrast furniture and accessories with. I also adore brown (4). • **Use good, plain fabrics.** Glazed linen is my favourite: it has sheen, but also texture and depth (5). • **Don't be overly influenced by other people, especially those who are considered authorities.** When I was new to interior design, I was told 'yellow should not be brought into the house' and this affected me until I realised that I like yellow, it's beautiful (5). nicholashaslam.com □

I always create something special at Christmas for the window of our Ebury Street showroom, usually involving polar bears and snow



3



4



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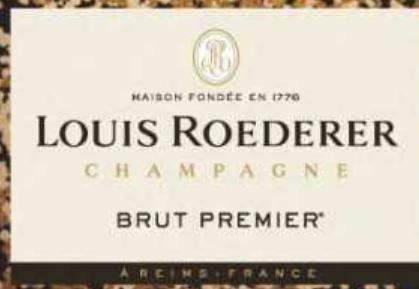
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U P O N A



Out of this world.



LOUIS ROEDERER
À LA RECHERCHE DE L'ŒUVRE

From
the
editor

“

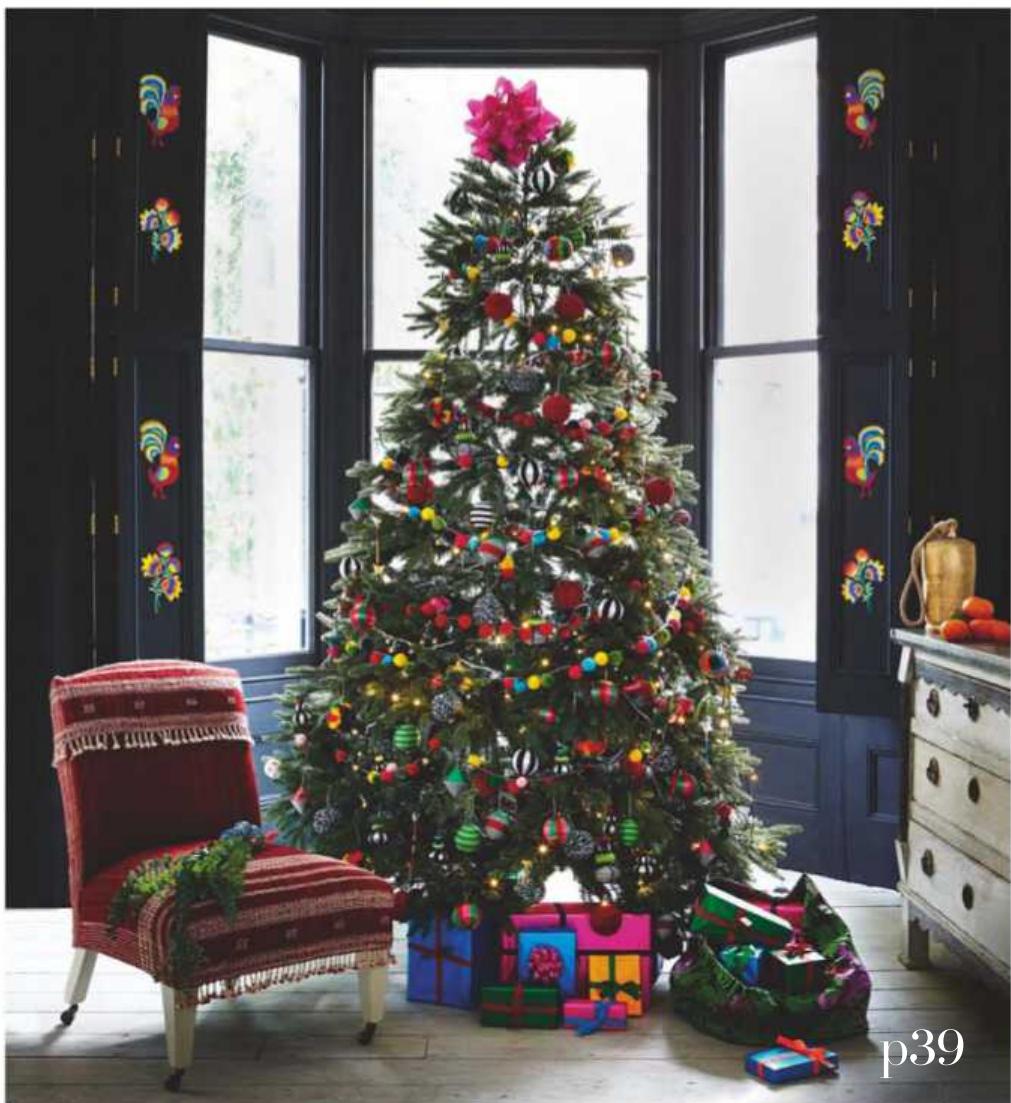
I refuse to get into a flap about Christmas this year: the mince pies will get made and the presents will get wrapped.

Why am I so confident that I'll be relaxed in the run-up to Christmas? Because my colleagues at *House & Garden* and I have devised a foolproof guide for the season ahead, including an edit of unique handmade gifts, a round-up of the prettiest wrapping papers and truly inspiring ideas for decorating. We've also enlisted a host of industry experts to give their tips on everything from being the perfect host to choosing which songs to play on Christmas Day. But I hope you'll take all of these as suggestions rather than instructions (you might want to take one or two of them with a grain of salt as well). Because we all do Christmas in our own way. That's part of the reason it's such a special time of year.

”

David Nicholls

COVER PHOTOGRAPH: A WREATH BY ZOE BRADLEY, PHOTOGRAPHED BY SUDHIR PITHWA. THIS PAGE: PHOTOGRAPHS BY RACHEL WHITING, OWEN GALE



p39

HARRODS
GIVEAWAY

Harrods, one of our favourite department stores and our partner in bringing you *Christmas Unwrapped*, is offering one reader the chance to win a £1,000 gift card. Find out how to enter the competition in the December issue's 'Out and about'

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EDITOR HATTA BYNG | CHRISTMAS UNWRAPPED EDITOR DAVID NICHOLLS | ART DIRECTOR JENNIFER LISTER | SUB-EDITOR BETHAN HILL | DEPUTY ART DIRECTOR JOSHUA MONAGHAN | PHOTOGRAPHY EDITOR OWEN GALE



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For the love of the land

Under the tree

By their nature, objects created through a **HANDMADE** process are imbued with a sense of individuality, character and charm. With this in mind, **BONNIE ROBINSON** has made a list (and checked it twice) of Christmas presents that range from the traditionally crafty to the cutting edge



1

Fabric and wire 'Golden Oriole'
SCULPTURE, 11cm tall,
£235, from Abigail Brown
(abigail-brown.co.uk) ▶



2

BYREDO

CARDAMOME

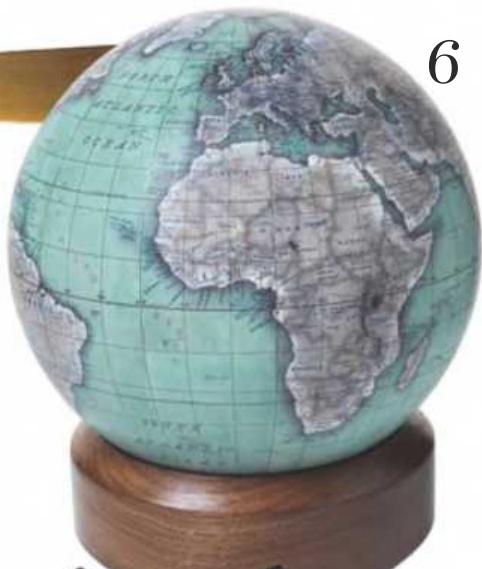
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4



5



6



8



7



9



10



12



11



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15

13 Leather 'Safari Air' CABIN CASE, by Globe-Trotter, £775, from Harrods (harrods.com) 14 'De Morgan Deer' TAPESTRY KIT, £65, from Fine Cell Work (finecellwork.co.uk) 15 Spun brass 'Form' MILK JUG, £50, from Tom Dixon (tomdixon.net) 16 Children's alpaca 'Intricate Fairisle' JUMPER, £98, from Hambro & Miller (hambroandmiller.co.uk) 17 Merino wool children's BLANKET (raspberry), £96, from Mourne Textiles (mournetextiles.com) 18 Ring-turned wooden FARM ANIMALS, £83 for a set of 11, from Manufactum (manufactum.co.uk) 19 Thrown and carved porcelain 'Garniture of Nine Vermillion Ombre' VASES, by Andrew Wicks, max height 28cm, £8,750 for a set of nine, from Adrian Sassoon (adriansassoon.com) 20 Cherry-wood 'Shaker' BOXES, from 11.5cm diameter £34.50 for a set of three, from Objects of Use (objectsofuse.co.uk) ▷



18



20





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CHRISTMAS UNWRAPPED



21 Painted 'PEG MEN', by Laura Carlin, £35 for two, from The New Craftsmen (thenewcraftsmen.com) **22** Wool felt and cotton child's 'FLOWER CROWN', £15, from Proverbial Daisies (proverbialdaisies.etsy.com) **23** Ash and sycamore 'We Trust In Wood' BOWL, by Matali Crasset, 15cm diameter, €39, from Crowd House (crowdyhouse.com) **24** Gold-plated flower SCISSORS, by Ernest Wright & Son, £50, from The New Craftsmen (thenewcraftsmen.com) **25** Lambswool 'Wave' MITTENS (seal/apple), £46, from Hilary Grant (hilarygrant.co.uk) **26** Scottish lambswool 'Fair Isle Tammy' HAT, £72, from Jo Gordon (jogordon.com) ▷

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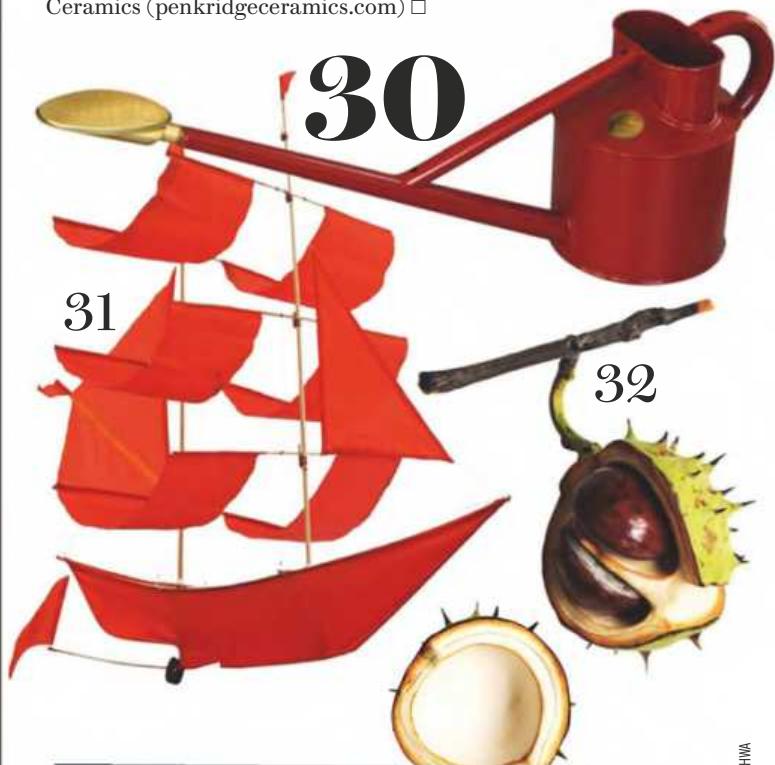
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CHRISTMAS UNWRAPPED



27 Silver and gold 'Small Oak Leaf' **EARRINGS**, £40 a pair, from Laura Baxter (laurabaxter.co.uk) 28 Cashmere and merino-wool 'Hause' **SOCKS** (natural), £75, from Esk (eskcashmere.com) 29 Painted ceramic ram **TOOTHPICK HOLDER**, by Bordallo Pinheiro, £53, from Saudade (saudade-shop.com) 30 Steel **WATERING CAN**, by Haws, 70cm long, £60, from Labour and Wait (labourandwait.co.uk) 31 Bamboo and nylon 'Sailing Ship' **KITE** (flame), 62.5cm tall, \$40, from Haptic Lab (hapticlab.com) 32 Painted ceramic 'Horse Chestnut Conker with Removable Nuts and Lid' **ORNAMENT**, £120, from Penkridge Ceramics (penkridgeceramics.com) □



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IT'S A WRAP

First impressions count, so the perfect present needs equally special wrapping. **VIOLA LANARI** has chosen a selection of chic sheets and pretty prints that will make decorating your present a piece of cake



1 JAPANESE WOODBLOCK PRINT, £12.99 for a book of 12 different sheets, from Pimpernel Press (pimpernelpress.co.uk). **2 'TREES'**, by Wrap, £1.85 a sheet, from Smug (ifeelsmug.com). **3 'CHARACTER WRAP'**, £4 for a 3-metre roll, from The White Company (thewhitecompany.com). **4 'NUTCRACKER CHRISTMAS WRAP'**, by Nancy & Betty Studio, £3.50 a sheet, from Harrods (harrods.com). **5 'STARS'**, £3 a sheet, from Shepherds Falkiners (store.bookbinding.co.uk). **6 'BERTIE SKIING'** (green), £2 a sheet, from Plum & Ashby (plumandashby.co.uk). **7 'TREE PATTERN'**, by Nineteen Seventy Three, £1.90 a sheet, from SCP (scp.co.uk). **8 'CHRISTMAS SKIING'**, £1.95 a sheet, from Chase and Wonder (chaseandwonder.com). **9 'GAMES ROOM TRIANGLES'** (blue and orange), by Wild & Wolf, £1.50 a sheet, from Bloomsbury Store (bloomsburystore.com). **10 'STONE LATTICE'** (yellow/red/blue), £3 a sheet, from Pentreath & Hall (pentreath-hall.com). **BACKGROUND AND FLOOR**, wallpaper, 'Indian Tea Paper' (azule cobalt), £116 a metre, from de Gournay (degournay.com). **HOLLY LEAVES**, cut from wallcovering, 'Milo' (vert), £268 a 10-metre roll, from Casamance (casamance.com). **PLUSH MICE**, £49.90 each, from Steiff (steiff.com). **'SANTA POM POM HAT TAG'**, £3.75 for three, from Meri Meri (merimeri.com). □



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SEASON'S GREETINGS

DAVID NICHOLLS gets a rare glimpse into Smythson's historic Christmas card archive, where he finds beautiful, traditional designs nestling alongside snapshots of social history



OF THEIR TIME

One of the most remarkable things about Smythson's archive is how unrecognisable most are as Christmas cards when viewed through twenty-first-century eyes



LOVE AND LUCK
Messages of hope and luck, and references to war-torn Europe were among Smythson's early Christmas card designs. Much of the company's business then was London-based, and clients could have their cards hand-delivered by uniformed Smythson 'post boys'

It is feared many designs were destroyed when Smythson's former Brook Street office was bombed by the Luftwaffe

— albeit large and ancient looking — album that has certainly seen better days. Direct sunlight is its enemy, as are heat and humidity. The album's spine is broken, the dark-brown pages on which the cards are mounted are shredded around the edges, and only half-heartedly protected by creased and stained wax paper. 'They just glued the cards into the book back then,' Victoria says. 'It's heart-breaking for an archivist to see something like that.' Nonetheless, it is treated with the reverence one might have for an original First Folio of Shakespeare's. Wearing cotton gloves in the exact shade of Smythson blue, Victoria carefully turns the pages, which date from the late-nineteenth century up to the early Fifties.

Familiar Christmas motifs catch the eye: mistletoe and plum puddings, snow scenes and robins, wise

men and Father Christmases, all beautifully illustrated. But these stand out because they are the exception; the majority are barely recognisable as Christmas cards.

Instead — in contrast to the majority of today's cards — they feature ideas and imagery that reflected the era in which they were produced. A light-hearted example from the 1890s shows Queen Victoria having tea with William Gladstone, with whom she was known to have had a fractious relationship. Above them are the words 'Peace on earth, goodwill to men'. Contemporary style is referenced with the image of a flapper girl on a circus swing, from 1925. Instead of reindeer, there are horse and hound scenes in celebration of the Boxing Day hunt. Does anyone send Boxing Day cards anymore?

Most poignant are the cards produced during the war years. Some are sombre in tone and design, others patriotic. One, with a thin tartan ribbon attached, simply reads 'Dinna forget'.

Although this is by no means a comprehensive collection of Smythson's historic cards, the archive has around 200 examples. 'There are certainly holes in the history,' Victoria explains. Much has been lost or lost track of; it is feared that some may have been destroyed when Smythson's former Brook Street office was bombed by the Luftwaffe. Gradually, though, Victoria is filling these gaps. She scours markets and eBay, and clients generously make donations.

It strikes me that the archive is more than a just record of the company's heritage. It's a little piece of social history, giving brief snapshots of life, the tension between celebration and mourning, and also the evolution of aesthetics over a 60-year period. It was a time when the handwritten note or card was, for most, the only way of keeping in touch and, for many, a potent way of expressing sentiments that can be difficult to put into words □

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PHOTOGRAPHS MICHAEL SINCLAIR

MERRY MAKERS



Zoe assembles a wreath, which is made from paper-thin, robust plastic attached to a handmade willow frame



ZOE BRADLEY

From striking shop-window installations to intricate wreaths for your front door, paper artist Zoe makes breathtaking Christmas decorations



ANTICLOCKWISE FROM LEFT Star garlands and a hydrangea art canvas. A rose for a wreath. Hanging decorations (also centre). A finished wreath (right)



Christmas is a big part of our lives, and when we create our installations there are always moments when we say, "Wow, wouldn't this look amazing decorating someone's house," says paper sculptor Zoe Bradley.

The installations to which she is referring are fantastical window and in-store displays made entirely from paper, for big-brand clients including Liberty, Louis Vuitton, The White Company and Smythson. Each takes between two and five months to create, which isn't surprising considering they begin as thousands of sheets of paper that must be brought to life, mostly by hand, via myriad techniques from pleating and folding to scoring and gluing. Individual 2D shapes may be created using a die or laser cutter, but even these follow templates Zoe has drawn, redrawn and refined to perfection. 'Every shape and silhouette is driven by my line, and the end sculpture is always in my hands.' The sculptures, every one an original, range from six-foot dresses and giant peacocks to beach scenes complete with huts, swimming costumes and sandcastles.

Many of Zoe's largest commissions are for Christmas displays, such as the intricate fairy-tale tableaux she created in 2009 for the windows of Tiffany & Co in Old Bond Street. These included a Cinderella-style carriage being pulled by butterflies, a pirouetting ballerina holding a tiny present above her head, and a staircase made from snowflakes. It is natural, therefore, that when she decided to design a product for the home, her thoughts turned to the festive season.

Her small collection of Christmas wreaths is inspired by the flora and fauna of a frozen winter landscape. They have a pared-back, Scandinavian-style aesthetic that feels modern yet magical, comprising leaves, flowers and other characters such as stars, drawn from her archive, which she has reinvented for each wreath. 'When I created each design, I worked very much like a florist, grouping together textures that I like and playing with scale,' explains Zoe. They are then attached to a hand-formed willow frame using wires and cables. Atypically, they are made from thin plastic that looks like paper, so the final product is robust enough to hang outside. 'We wanted something that people would bring out and enjoy year after year. It is a little piece of art to hang on your door.' ▶

Zoe Bradley: zoebradleyshop.com. Wreaths are made to order, which takes three weeks and costs from £140



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ADRIAN HOPE

Inspired by the significance of reliquary boxes, silversmith Adrian has created a nativity box destined to be a family treasure



My grandfather had a room full of boxes. Some were Indian silver, others brass, there were wooden ones and a few were made from simple cardboard. Inside were cufflinks, old train tickets, bullets, razor blades, all sorts. As a small boy, I thought it was brilliant,' says Adrian Hope, an award-winning silversmith whose work is represented in public collections and museums including the V&A. 'I think artists draw on what they saw when they were wide-eyed, utterly engaged children,' he adds. That said, it was many years before the boxes made their way into Adrian's work.

Adrian's career began 40 years ago, but he made the first in a series of reliquary boxes in 2003. This autumn, he completed his 'Nativity Box' which, like its predecessors, takes a house-shape form. The roof, topped with an 18-carat-gold Star of Bethlehem, is the lid. The geometric surface patterning is the result of Adrian's research into tessellation, and is applied using paper embossing, his variation on paper rolling. At the front is an arch, complete with a tiny working latch, and inside is a removable figure of Mary cradling the baby Jesus carved from boxwood and cast in solid silver.

At just 12.5cm tall, the 'Nativity Box' is an exquisite object: beautiful, tactile, brimming with meaning. As expected of a one-off piece made from precious metal, it is priced as something destined to become a treasured family heirloom.

Childhood experiences aside, Adrian believes the origins of his boxes are two-fold. First, in the house-shape shrines he saw at an exhibition on the Celtic world at the National Museum of Scotland, and secondly in the seventeenth- and eighteenth-century reliquaries he saw in the Museo dell'Opera del Duomo in Pisa, said to contain the remains of



CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT Adrian at his home in the Scottish borders. A 'Nativity Box' cast in solid silver, which has an 18-carat-gold star on the lid. Working in his studio. Putting the finishing touches to a figure of Mary

saints. 'Reliquaries are about remembrance. They are places to put items that mean something.'

The first ones he made were house shaped but empty. Then, while being filmed by The Goldsmiths' Company, he started sketching from a picture of the Voyage of St Brendan. 'In 20 seconds, I'd designed a box with a wave pattern and a boat, called "Reliquary for a Traveller". I can't explain exactly why, or what it means. But if I could, I wouldn't have to make it.'

Adrian will continue to make reliquary boxes, but he will not alter his version of the Nativity. 'People have asked if I am going to make the three kings. I'm not. Why would I? The whole story is already there.' ▷

Adrian Hope: 01721-760229; adrianhope.co.uk. A 'Nativity Box' costs £4,450. Adrian will exhibit his work at 'Handmade in Britain 15: The Contemporary Crafts & Design Fair' at Chelsea Old Town Hall, SW3, November 13–15; handmadeinbritain.co.uk



CLOCKWISE FROM FAR LEFT Anna in her studio at her house in north London. Stockings with white and red designs. Anna's knitting machine. Hand-signing a label. Anna's dog Nancy guards a cone of wool (centre)

ANNA SÖDERSTRÖM

Knitwear designer Anna has added a Swedish aesthetic to the much-loved Christmas stocking

When I was pregnant with my daughter, I suffered terribly with morning sickness. It was really awful. I couldn't do anything, even read,' recalls Anna Söderström. Salvation came in the form of a thoughtful friend bearing knitting needles and yarn. This meditative activity soothed Anna through more than 20 nauseous weeks, and provided an occupation for the remainder of her pregnancy. By the time Siri, now five, was born, Anna had taught herself to knit, and she was designing her own patterns using just a pencil and graph paper. 'The type of thing I wanted didn't seem to exist, so I decided to invent it,' she says.

Her inspiration is the traditional knitwear of Gotland, an island off Sweden where she spent her childhood summers cycling and climbing the strange rock formations. 'Sweden is known for ornate designs like the snowflake, and I like to incorporate these traditional motifs into my style, which is more minimal,' she explains.

Although she has no history of making (she read modern languages at Oxford's Hertford College), the items Anna designed and made instantly drew interest. After several commissions from friends, she set up her business selling a range of mainly cashmere scarves, hats and blankets



from her website, at fairs and through a handful of fashion boutiques in London, including The Cross and Wolf & Badger.

The most recent addition to her collection is Christmas stockings, which have a pattern adapted from a nineteenth-century book by Hermanna Stengard, a Gotland native who collected garments and patterns. 'In Sweden, we don't have stockings. We celebrate on Christmas Eve; Father Christmas sits with each family and gives out the presents in person. So it was an English experiment, but I got a wonderful response.' There are four colourways: red, green, blue and white, each teamed with black.

Everything in the collection is made on a domestic knitting machine, either by Anna or one of two ladies she employs when demand is high. 'The knitting machine creates a problem with the term handmade. People imagine you throw yarn in one end and jumpers come out the other end. But it is entirely manual, like a weaver's loom,' she explains.

A stocking takes over an hour to knit. It is then washed and air-dried before being finished with Anna's trademark embossed leather tag, and hand-signed label. The result is undoubtedly handcrafted – with all the care, labour and attention to detail the term implies – and also, of course, extremely lovely. It is hard to imagine a more perfect stocking to hang on the mantelpiece come Christmas Eve □

Anna Söderström: annasoderstrom.com. A Christmas stocking costs £48

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PHOTOGRAPH: ALI ALLEN

A winter's tale

Celebrate Christmas with a host of unique and inspiring gift ideas from LAURA ASHLEY and find seasonal treats for you and your home



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'KINSLEY' CUSHION, £40,
floral print in bronze, 40x50cm



PEAR SCENTED CANDLE, £16,
silver metal, 15x9cm



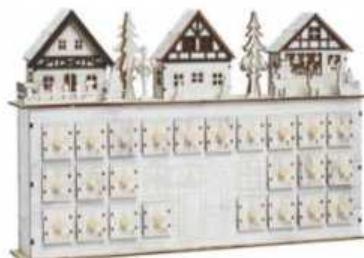
'DARTMOOR' FAUX-FUR THROW, £160,
modacrylic and polyester,
in chocolate, 130x170cm



SILVER-RIM GLASS TUMBLERS, £8
each, crystal glass, 9.5cm, 8.4cm diameter



GAMES COMPENDIUM, £25,
wood, 26.5x26.5cm



WOODEN ADVENT CALENDAR, £48,
white, 32.5x44x7cm



BRASS CUT-OUT WALL CLOCK, £130,
metal and glass, 62cm diameter



MULLED SPICE MINI GIFT SET, £25
glass diffuser, scent and two scented candles,
20x10x6.5cm

HELP SAVE THE KITCHEN TABLE



The kitchen table is more than a place for meals; it's a place where families meet. But was the wood it's made from harvested sustainably? Used to be hard to tell. Now shoppers can look for the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) label to make sure wooden furniture, and a variety of other products, are forest-friendly. WWF helped start the FSC to ensure that the world's forests are managed responsibly, and that people and wildlife who depend on forests can continue to do so long into the future. Help us look after the world where you live at panda.org



Virunga National Park, Democratic Republic of Congo.

© Kate Holt / WWF-UK

HOW TO DO CHRISTMAS

A procession of wise men and women offer their advice on decorating with style, delighting the senses, and creating a season of comfort, joy and lifelong memories

INTERVIEWS DAVID NICHOLLS AND EMILY TOBIN | ILLUSTRATIONS DERMOT FLYNN



CHOOSE EVOCATIVE SEASONAL SCENTS

Roja Dove, fragrance specialist and owner/founder of Roja Parfums

When I think about Christmas, I picture bringing the majesty of nature inside – the smell of fir and pine, for example. Good vetiver has a great smokiness and lets you get lost in the idea of an open fire, even if you don't have one. It's OK to create the illusion of something that doesn't actually exist – who really has chestnuts roasting on an open fire? I'll often decorate the table with branches of fir and warm gingerbread. If you are burning scented candles, avoid anything sweet and floral; it's the wrong time of year. Go for wood, spice and amber notes. It's a good idea to burn a scented candle for a couple of hours before your guests visit and put it out shortly after their arrival. You don't really get a sense of how a scent builds when you've been in the room all day. I like to burn something fresh like neroli to get rid of the smell of food the next morning. But I wouldn't burn citrus then – it's a bit like shining a bright light in your eyes straight after you wake up: far too much. ▷



TRY A FESTIVE FRUITY TREE

Alidad, interior designer

The tree should be the crescendo to your decorating. Tinsel is an absolute no; I can't bear it. I hang pomegranates instead of baubles. They're a beautiful rich red and evoke the same effect in a much more interesting way than traditional decorations. To these, I usually add oranges and tangerines – some with cloves – and perhaps a few apples. By using fruit, the tree is fresh and alive. Pine cones add texture, while bundles of cinnamon sticks tied with ribbon or raffia look and smell lovely.



Don't forget the exterior

Tim Gosling, furniture and interior designer

Last year, we decorated the front of the town house that houses our office with such gusto that the neighbours thought a new restaurant had opened. The entire façade was white and cream, except for two wreaths – one inside the other – which were lit with red lights. There is usually a Christmas tree or a couple of full-size reindeer sculptures on the portico, but remember that if you want to add a three-metre polar bear to your scheme, you have to order it in the middle of the summer!

Think of others

Francis Sultana, interior designer

Every August, I sit down to design my next Christmas card. For the past six years I have drawn a chair – in four years' time, once I have

10 drawings of chairs, my plan is to have them made into real children's chairs and auction them to raise money for the NSPCC, where I'm one of a network of senior volunteers in London. I am also the creative director for the design and production of the annual NSPCC Art Gala, which this year ran alongside Masterpiece.

Venture further afield

Pamela Goodman, travel editor of House & Garden

I have friends who, every year, go out for Christmas Day lunch in London, then take an evening flight to somewhere hot and sunny for a week. Flights on Christmas Day and Boxing Day can be much less expensive, so it's worth looking into this if you fancy a break without spending a fortune. Last year, I went to Prague between Christmas and New Year and rented a fantastic flat through Airbnb. The Christmas markets were still going and it was festive and wonderful.

Fill Christmas with humour

Harriet Anstruther, interior designer

Dressing up is a must – the more ridiculous, the better. In my house, this includes the dog, who wears knitted antlers and a pale pink coat. And I always buy lots of stick-on moustaches. We also have a tradition where we have to give a truly awful present that costs under £5. Last year I found a knitted loo-paper holder on eBay for £2.39.

PRESENT YOUR PRESENTS IN STYLE

Annabel Lewis, founder of VV Rouleaux

have to admit, I find it distressing to receive a present that is wrapped without any care. It just makes me think, 'no effort'. Then again, when I receive a nicely wrapped present, I don't want to open it! The thing is, the parcel is part of the present – the best bit is the anticipation of what's inside. It's all in the reveal, isn't it? That's the role of the wrapping. Here are a few rules I stick to.

Be prepared

You should always have a wrapping drawer with bits in it: scissors, ribbons, papers and tissue paper. Double-sided sticky tape is preferable to Sellotape so that you don't ruin the outside of the wrapping.

Outer beauty

It almost doesn't matter what's inside. One of my sisters gave me a bag of logs and four

bags of sticks for the fire last year. It might not sound exciting (although I thought it was), but she tied a pretty ribbon round the top and it looked beautiful.

Keep it simple

I don't see the point in trying to wrap odd shapes like bottles – put them in a box or something that's easier to wrap.

Recycle and reuse

Whenever my sister comes to our house, she arrives with a present wrapped in the papers and ribbon that I gave her the year before. She keeps everything, and so do I. You never know what will come in handy.

Alternative wraps

If your piece of paper isn't big enough for the gift, combine papers to create a patchwork. Along a similar line, I once colour photocopied and changed the scale of bits of ribbons and then stuck all the bits together to create a collage of papers with

ribbon prints. I also like the idea of using giant bubble wrap on a child's gift and inserting sweeties into the back of each of the bubbles so that the wrapping feels like a present in itself.

Labelling your gifts

I like to cut up old Christmas cards – scenes of ducks on a pond or Father Christmas – and stick them onto another piece of card with a name written on. I punch a hole in it and then secure with a ribbon. My daughter Fernanda had the idea of picking up paint-colour charts from decorating stores and cutting out the swatches with names that fit the recipient. There are some brilliant paint names. I think the one she gave me may have been Farrow & Ball's 'Elephant's Breath'.

Don't be too prepared

It's a big mistake buying presents early on; you inevitably later discover them hidden in cupboards and end up having bought double of everything. ▷



INVOLVE EVERYBODY

Hatta Byng, editor of House & Garden

Growing up, we took decorating for Christmas very seriously, inspired by my mother, who did flowers for weddings and parties. Each year, we would divvy up the elements that we were to decorate: the tree, mantelpieces in the drawing room and over the Aga, the stairs, the kitchen table and so on. It was about working with decorations that had been collected over time – my mother added a few new things each year – and anything we could find in the garden. There was plenty of competition about who could be the most creative, not always with successful results. The dining-room table was the beneficiary of the most outlandish schemes – one year, much to the bewilderment of my cousins, we threaded ivy into chicken wire and ran it down the centre of the table like a bizarre sculpture. Sadly, now we are grown-up and have jobs and families of our own, we rarely make it to my parents' in time to be so involved, although my mother will reserve elements on request... I can't quite give up the old times. When my children are old enough, they will be fully encouraged to be involved.



Make sense of stockings

Nina Campbell, interior designer

I can remember to this day my feeling of disappointment when my mother told me she thought I was too old to have a stocking. I was scarred for life, though it was a momentary blip – she saw how devastated I was and ran around the house on Christmas Eve trying to find things. So, despite being grown up now, my children all still get one. Everything is wrapped in tissue and every member of the family has a different colour. That way you can start wrapping early and know whose is whose, rather than after midnight mass when you're dog-tired. Paperchase has a wonderful selection of coloured tissue paper; I love the scrunch it makes. I bought pillowcases from the Monogrammed Linen Shop (monogrammedlinenshop.com) one year, which read 'Happy Christmas'. Everyone had one at the end of their beds and it all felt very cheery indeed.



DISPLAY GREETINGS CARDS STYLISHLY

Audrey Carden of Carden Cunietti, interior designer

This is a tricky one, because if you put them on a table or on a mantelpiece, they're always falling over. That said, hanging them around a mirror or artwork is even worse; I just think it's so cheesy. I usually put them on my Christmas tree. I buy the biggest pine I can fit into the house, cover it in white lights and place the cards between the branches. I finish off the tree with a set of silver hand-grenade decorations from Amnesty International, which always provoke comment. It's a sort of Massive Attack, 'urban warrior' tree.



SERVE UP TEMPTING TIPPLES

Joanna Simon, House & Garden wine and food editor

I've long since got over the temptation to dust down great treasures from the cellar at Christmas. We drink good bottles, but it's not the occasion for reverential wine appreciation. As for the rest of the booze list, its first duty is to be fun. The varied guests – I'm never sure who might come out of the woodwork – make it ideal for indulging in a bit of nostalgia and even kitsch. I draw the line at Babycham, but eggnog, punch and mulled wine all put the festivity into Christmas, especially given a few contemporary tweaks.

Eggnog

So retro and homely, it's right on song and as chic as anything if served in a martini or punch glass. I favour bourbon or rum over whisky or brandy and, as well as the grated nutmeg, I sometimes add a dusting of chocolate, cinnamon, cayenne pepper or orange zest.

Punch

Few things kick off Christmas like a gleaming bowl of punch. When I was a student, punch meant a bucketful of leftover spirits and liqueurs, but now I stick to a recipe, usually Non-such punch at Christmas (brandy, red wine, green tea, lemon, spices, soda water and sugar syrup), adding a personal touch with the garnishes – fruit, herbs, spices or flowers.

Mulled wine

Red wine warmed with spices is one of the most welcoming smells of Christmas, especially when you come in from a long, post-prandial walk. I ring the changes with cardamom, star anise and bay leaves, clementine or kumquat instead of orange, and lime instead of lemon.

BE THE HOST WITH THE MOST

Jesus Adorno, director of Caprice Holdings

I grew up in Bolivia and, for me, Christmas was always a big family occasion with 20 to 30 people and a feast on Christmas Eve. Christmas Day was for sleeping off the food and alcohol. Things are more subdued in London, and I don't have that much space, but with an extension to the dining table we'll still seat 12 people. Four to six guests is manageable by someone hosting on their own, but any more and you need a co-host! My wife and I are never in the kitchen at the same time; one of us is always with the guests. I like to write an invitation card. There's something so magical about holding a written invitation rather than reading an email. Hosting is about creating an

ambiance: getting the lighting right, the Champagne or wine, the music (I normally have Classic FM playing) and encouraging conversation. If people don't know each other, introductions are essential. It also helps to have drinks and canapés while standing up rather than sitting down. It makes it easier for people to mingle, and for me to make sure everyone is happy and has a full glass. At dinner, couples are split up, and we try to alternate genders and mix the old with the young. It creates a good dynamic. I'm a firm believer that if people come to your house, you must entertain them, and my real enjoyment comes from seeing people smiling and chatting. That's when I know it's been a good night. ▷



USE A FAMILY RECIPE

Jessica Abela, food buyer at Harrods

I'm from Malta, where a lot of the cuisine is influenced by English cooking. So, unusually for the Mediterranean, our Christmas dinner included turkey and ham and all the classic side dishes. My Maltese grandmother would make the most delicious mince pies with lots of cinnamon. I remember her serving them after church with a cup of tea; the crunch of the sugar dusting, the buttery pastry and the filling that included local ingredients like prunes and figs. Over the years, my family moved around, but this recipe travelled with us. Now I use it in London. In fact, my grandmother's recipe was the inspiration for Harrods' new Classic Mince Pies, which we are launching this Christmas. Below is the original. Enjoy, and feel free to pass it on. *Makes 16 mince pies*

For the mincemeat

- 15g sultanas and 80g currants
- 50g glacé cherries
- 50g prunes, chopped
- 50g dried figs, chopped
- 1 cooking apple, peeled and chopped finely
- 80g chopped citrus peel
- 350ml brandy
- 1 lemon, zest and juice
- 1tbsp cinnamon
- 1tsp nutmeg
- 1tsp all spice

For the pastry

- 260g unsalted butter, diced and softened
- 375g plain flour, sifted
- 125g golden caster sugar, plus extra for sprinkling
- 1 large egg, plus 1 beaten egg for glazing
- Icing sugar, for dusting

1 Soak the dried fruits and peel in 200ml brandy for a few hours until juicy and plump. Strain over a bowl.

Mix in the lemon zest and juice, spices and the remaining brandy.

- 2** For the pastry, rub the butter into the flour until it looks like breadcrumbs. Mix in the sugar, egg and a pinch of salt and combine until the pastry forms a ball. Knead for a few minutes, then wrap in clingfilm and chill for 30 minutes. Heat the oven to 200°C/fan oven 180°C/mark 6.
- 3** Roll out the pastry to 3mm thick. Using a round cutter (about 10cm), cut out 16 circles and place them into muffin trays. Repeat this with a slightly smaller round cutter for the lids. Put 1 heaped tbsp mincemeat into each base, brush the edges with a little beaten egg and pop the lids on. Glaze with the rest of the egg, sprinkle with caster sugar, then make a small cut in the tops from which steam will escape.
- 4** Bake for 15–20 minutes until golden brown. When cooled, turn out and dust with icing sugar.



Know that more is more

Joanna Wood, interior designer

You can never have too many decorations. As a general rule, keep going. I have two huge trunks crammed with decorations, which I add to every year. You must start from the tree and move out from there. I'm a great believer in using lots of greenery and flowers; they can be used for swags, added to the tree and put on the table. You must always decorate the mantelpiece. Red roses dry to a nice claret colour and look very smart in small vases.

Inject some personality

Suzy Hoodless, interior designer

My first daughter was born just before Christmas so, to celebrate, I tied neon pink ribbons to our tree. Two years later, my second daughter was born and I added neon yellow ribbons. Last year, our son arrived, and I added bright green ribbons to the mix.

Get the right lights

Henri Fitzwilliam-Lay, interior designer

Don't use different sets of lights on your tree. I use LEDs in white and, if they're from different batches or different companies, the brightness will vary and you'll end up with ugly dark spots. Electric candles are great. They look real and you don't need to worry about your house burning down in the night. ▷

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Andrew Earis, director of music at St Martin-in-the-Fields

1 'Once in Royal David's City' by

Cecil Frances Alexander, performed by St Martin's Voices (Will Todd Ensemble)

Will Todd is known for doing contemporary versions of traditional pieces and here St Martin's Voices sing with a jazz arrangement. It's an iconic carol – usually the opening piece for the King's College Christmas carol service – but has been really livened up for the twenty-first century.

2 'Christmas Lullaby' by John Rutter

and The Cambridge Singers

John Rutter is probably the most famous Christmas carol writer who is still living. This is my favourite song of his. It's so accessible, still and calm, and allows the listener to step back from the hustle and bustle.

3 'Christmas Oratorio BWV 248:

No 10 Sinfonia' by Johann Sebastian Bach, performed by Academy of St Martin-in-the-Fields Chorus

This piece has a beautiful tune that people will know, and it tells the story of Christmas. I think, in terms of classical orchestral music, it's one of the few pieces that really beautifully sets the scene.

4 'Walking in the Air' by Howard Blake, from

'The Snowman', performed by Peter Auty

Throughout my entire childhood, we would go to my grandparents' house on Christmas

Day and, at 4pm, we would gather to watch *The Snowman* on television. It was that one moment we waited for each year and I think of that whenever I hear it.

5 'The Little Road to Bethlehem' by

Michael Head and Margaret Rose, performed by Aled Jones

This is like a Christmas folk song, and I think of it as a real 'children around the Christmas tree' piece, with presents being opened, while lyrics like 'sleep my little king, go lullaby' also give reference to baby Jesus in the manger.

6 'Santa Claus is Coming to Town'

by John Frederick Coots and Haven Gillespie, performed by Frank Sinatra

Christmas wouldn't be Christmas without Frank on your playlist. Many artists have recorded this song, but Sinatra does it with so much emotion and has this special way of drawing you in and telling the story.

7 'The Christmas Song' by Bob Wells and

Mel Tormé, performed by Nat King Cole

This is my favourite song on the list. I like the big-band jazz feel, which in musical terms is a lot more heavyweight than a lot of popular Christmas songs. With the 'chestnuts roasting on an open fire' introduction, it's the perfect song to play with the family gathering for dinner.

8 'Feed the World (Do They Know It's Christmas)' by Bob Geldof and

Midge Ure, performed by Band Aid

People are divided on this song, but for many people, its 1984 release was the first time they were exposed to what was happening in the world – the famine in Ethiopia. It was very much a statement of its time, and is still so relevant today. That line 'feed the world', when all the voices come together, expresses a community spirit, which is what the song is about.

9 'Let it Snow!' by Sammy Cahn and Jule Styne, performed by Dean Martin

It's not telling the deep Christmas story, but it's fun. I associate this song with last-minute preparations – the song that you'd hear over the tannoy of your local shopping centre on Christmas Eve, or on the radio while you're making mince pies.

10 'All I Want for Christmas is You', by

Mariah Carey and Walter Afanasieff

This is a great song, and is clever in that it attempts to address what Christmas means to families. Mariah's voice has so much emotion and sits well with the quality of music □

To find out how you can download this playlist on Spotify, visit houseandgarden.co.uk/christmasplaylist



Christmas Banquet Hamper - £150

Indulge this Christmas and save lives at sea
RNLISHOP.org

The RNLI is the charity that saves lives at sea.

Royal National Lifeboat Institution, a charity registered in England and Wales [209603], Republic of Ireland [20003326] and Scotland [SC037736]. RNLI [Sales] Ltd - 2202240, registered in England and Wales at West Quay Road, Poole BH15 1HZ. The contents of all food products are subject to change when necessary, however every attempt will be made to provide the nearest alternative.

RNLI SHOP | **Lifeboats**



Christmas

CHRISTMAS UNWRAPPED

PUNCH

RUTH SLEIGHOLME

dreams up a fun take on festive decoration, by combining bright pinks, blues and yellows with the more traditional red

PHOTOGRAPHS RACHEL WHITING



THIS PAGE FURNITURE Wool-upholstered **slipper chair** with beech legs, 99 x 60cm square, £2,154, from Irving & Morrison (irvingandmorrison.com). **ACCESSORIES** 2.5-metre faux **Christmas tree**, 'Albert', £355, from Neptune (neptune.com). **Decorations:** Assorted cording and wool decorations, from £3 each, from Habitat (habitat.co.uk). Pom-pom garlands, 175cm long, £9.50 each, and woollen pom-pom baubles, £1.50 each, all from RE (re-foundobjects.com). **Fairy lights** (warm white), £12.99 for a 10-metre string, from Lights4Fun (lights4fun.co.uk). **Sisal basket**, 'Fluoro', £16, from The Basket Room. **Bauble** (on chair) 'Twizza', £8 for three, from Habitat.

OPPOSITE PAGE WALLS Paint (on skirting and window frames), 'Jack Black', £37 for 2.5 litres matt emulsion, from Little Greene (littlegreene.com). Bespoke hand-painted chicken and flower **motifs**, from £100 a square metre for similar, from Annie Millar (anniemillar.co.uk). **FURNITURE** **Slipper chair**, as before. Swedish painted pine **chest of drawers**, 90 x 118 x 70cm, £2,580; from Irving & Morrison (irvingandmorrison.com). **ACCESSORIES** **Christmas tree** and **decorations**, as before. Tree

TAKE COVER

Use a festive fabric to make a loose cover for a chair; to be pulled on only at Christmas

GO BOLD

Choose bright and cheerful decorations for an unstuffy, eye-catching tree

topped with giant metallic **present bow**, £5.99, from Paperchase (paperchase.co.uk). Handmade **present bag** in fabric, 'Bataille de Fleurs' (bougainvillier), by Christian Lacroix for Designers Guild, cotton with viscose embroidery, £164 a metre, from Harrods (harrods.com). **Metallic gift wrap**, £7.96 a 10-metre roll, from The Conran Shop (conranshop.co.uk).

Grosgrain ribbon (on presents), £1.75 for 3 metres, and **present bows**, 50p each, all from Paperchase (paperchase.co.uk). Carved resin **baubles** (on chair), £22 for three, from Toast (toast.co.uk). **Brass camel bell**, £10.50, from Rowen & Wren (rowenandwren.co.uk) ▷

BOW TIE

A ribbon bow is a fun alternative to a star. Ours is from Paperchase

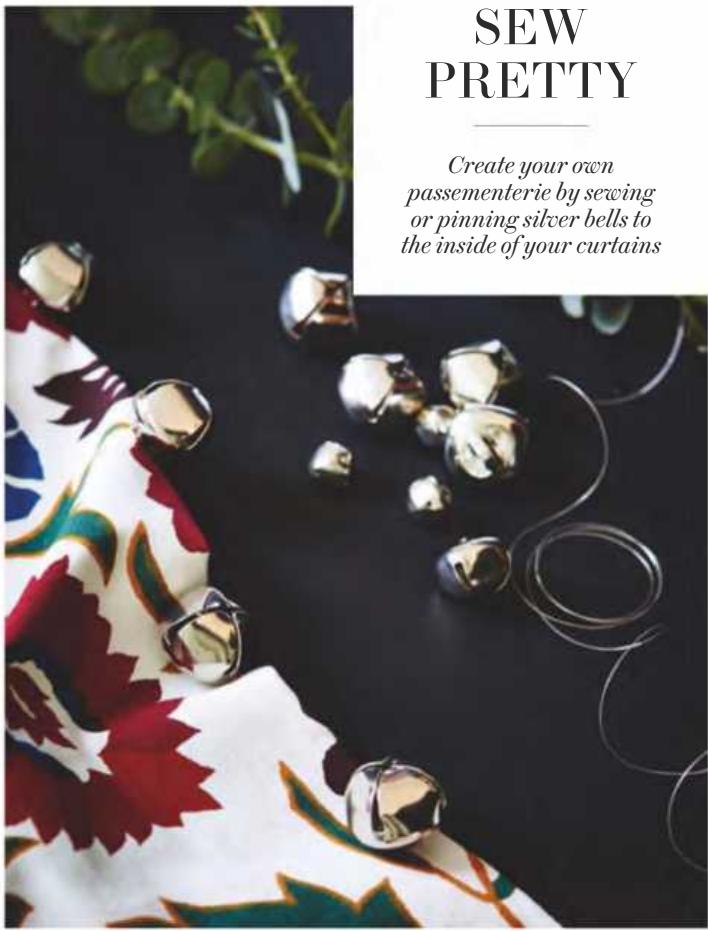


IT'S IN THE BAG

Fabric offcuts can be made into decorative present bags, to be used in place of traditional stockings

SEW PRETTY

Create your own passementerie by sewing or pinning silver bells to the inside of your curtains



ABOVE Fabric, curtain, 'Bokhara' (red on white), by John Stefanidis, linen, £176 a metre, at Tissus d'Hélène (tissusdhelene.co.uk). **Tin bells**, £2 for a pack of 30, from Hobbycraft (hobbycraft.co.uk). **OPPOSITE WALLS** Curtains, 'Bokhara', as before. **Paint** (on skirting and window frames), 'Jack Black', £37 for 2.5 litres matt emulsion, from Little Greene (littlegreene.com).

FURNITURE Lacquered wood **desk**, 'Enid' (blue), 76 x 110 x 50cm, £2,832, from Nina Campbell (shop.ninacampbell.com). Lacquered wood **chair**, 'Marianne', by Fornasetti, 80 x 39 x 35cm, £3,500, from Harrods (harrods.com). Lacquered wood **bedside tables**, 'Holly' (turquoise), 70 x 35cm square, £1,122.86 each, from Julian Chichester (julianchichester.com). Silk-upholstered Howard-style **daybed**, 82 x 160 x 60cm, £3,750, from Robert Kime (robertkime.com). **ACCESSORIES** Resin **lamp base**, 'Spring' (pink), with bookcloth **shade** (lemon), by Marianna Kennedy, £495, from Pentreath & Hall (pentreath-hall.com). Glass **decanter**, 'Tulipmania', £225, and matching **tumbler**, £100, by Lobmeyr, from Harrods (harrods.com). Pink **crepe paper**, £1.75 a 2.5-metre roll, from Paperchase (paperchase.co.uk). Bespoke giant **paper rosettes**, by Comeuppance, from £75 each, from Etsy (etsy.com). **Bells** (on curtains), as before. Resin **candlesticks** (black and yellow), £120 each, from Marianna Kennedy (mariannakennedy.com). Coloured **candles**, three for £1, from Tiger (tigerstores.co.uk). **Sisal basket**, 'Fluoro', £35, from The Basket Room (thebasketroom.com). Black **sparkle ribbon**, £5.95 for 3 metres, and **neon ribbons**, £4.95 for 3 metres, all from Wild & Wolf (wildandwolf.com). Cotton **cushion**, 'Orchard Goat', by Louise Wilkinson, £46, from Heal's (heals.com).

CANDLES **DETAIL WALLS** **Wallpaper**, 'La Paiva' (multicolore), by Braquenié, 140cm wide, £144 a metre, from Pierre Frey at Harrods (harrods.com). **Candlesticks** and **candles**, both as before. See previous pages for details of the Christmas tree, its decorations and the wrapping on the presents underneath and in the basket ▶

BRIGHT LIGHT

Replace white dinner candles with a mix of brightly coloured ones for an injection of jollity



SUPER SIZE

Go oversize on decorations for impact. One of these paper rosettes would hold its own in a small room



SWEET STREAMS

Paper streamers – very simply made by rolling a sheet of crepe paper and cutting into slices like a swiss roll – can be garlanded around for a village-hall-celebration look





CREATIVE CAKE

Decorate your traditional Christmas cake with the same colours and patterns as your interior scheme



LEFT WALLS **Wallpaper**, 'La Païva' (multicolore), by Braquenié, 140cm wide, £144 a metre, from Pierre Frey at Harrods (harrods.com). **Curtains**, 'La Païva' (multicolore), linen mix, by Braquenié, £273.60 a metre, from Pierre Frey at Harrods (harrods.com). **Paint** (on skirting and window frames), 'Jack Black', £37 for 2.5 litres matt emulsion, from Little Greene (littlegreenecom). **FURNITURE** Nineteenth-century **sofa**, upholstered in pink mohair velvet, 102 x 186 x 85cm, £7,400, Talisman (talismanlondon.com). Beech-framed **sofa**, 'Uppark', upholstered in 'Antique Yellow', linen, 90 x 221 x 80cm, £6,836, from Max Rollitt (maxrollitt.com). Beech-framed **coffee table**, 'Waisted', 40 x 120 x 60cm, £650, from David Seyfried (davidseyfried.com); covered in 'Gassin' (ciel), by Manuel Canovas, wool mix, £98 a metre, from Colefax and Fowler (colefax.com). Nineteenth-century French **chair**, 81 x 50 x 81cm, £850, from Josephine Ryan Antiques (josephinryanantiques.co.uk); covered in 'Donegal Check' (red), by Sequana, wool, £150 a metre, from Tissus d'Hélène (tissusdhelene.co.uk); trimmed in 'Seychelles Wood Teardrop Fringe' (garnet), £79 a metre, from Samuel & Sons (samuelandsons.com). Lacquered wood **side table**, 'Tini' (rainwashed), 51 x 46 x 20cm, £320, from Nina Campbell (shop.ninacampbell.com). **ACCESSORIES** Handmade bespoke paper and straw **chandeliers**, 'Pajaki', from £90, from Karolina Merska (bobbinandbow.com). **Garland** in crepe paper, £1.75 a 2.5-metre roll, from Paperchase (paperchase.co.uk). Nineteenth-century Kashmiri hand-painted wooden **floor lamp**, £2,250 for two; with antique linen **shade**, £485, both from Robert Kime (robertkime.com). Hemp **cushion** (in front), 'Chanvre' (pluvier prunelle), £56; and jute **cushion**, 'Kilim' (indigo), £51; both from Caravane (caravane.fr). **Envelopes**, £3.75 for a pack of five, from Paperchase (paperchase.co.uk). Metallic **Christmas crackers** (green), £45 for six, from The Conran Shop (conranshop.co.uk). **Sisal baskets**, 'Fluoro', from £22 each, from The Basket Room (thebasketroom.com). Acrylic **vase**, 'Bloomin' (red), by Alexandra von Furstenberg, £290, from The Conran Shop (conranshop.co.uk). Coloured **tealights**, £16.50 for 40, from RE (re-foundobjects.com). **ABOVE** **Background** Hand-knotted wool **rug**, 'Herringbone', by Jonathan Saunders, £735 a square metre, from The Rug Company (therugcompany.com). Bespoke hand-decorated Christmas **cake**, from £350 for similar, from Cressida Bell (cressidabell.co.uk). Porcelain **side plate**, 'Schiap', 20cm, £5.50, from Oka (okadirect.com). Gold-plated **cake fork**, 'Venise', by L'Objet, £135 for four, from Harrods (harrods.com). Carved resin **baubles**, £22 for three, from Toast (toast.co.uk). **Ribbon**, £5.95 for 3 metres, from Wild & Wolf (wildandwolf.com). See previous pages for details of the wrapping used for the presents □

NAUGHTY



AND NICE

For the ultimate indulgence, consider swapping the traditional Christmas pudding for a decadent chocolate dessert.

JOANNA SIMON selects some favourites, plus drinks to match

Opposite
CHOCOLATE AND BEETROOT CAKE

This page
**CHOCOLATE,
STOUT AND
BROWN-SUGAR
MOUSSES**

RECIPES: DIANA HENRY; PHOTOGRAPHS: JAN BALDWIN; JONATHAN GREGSON; FOOD PREPARATION AND STYLING: LOUISE MACKNESS; TABLE STYLING: ALEXANDER BREEZE; HARRIET BINDLOSS



Previous pages

CHOCOLATE AND BEETROOT CAKE

The beetroot is subtle but helps to produce a wonderfully soft, moist cake with a sweet berry flavour that is enhanced by the crème de cassis in the glaze. You can get perfectly good ready-cooked beetroot – but avoid buying the pickled stuff for this recipe. Serves 8-10

For the cake

- 250g cooked beetroot, peeled
- 75g plain chocolate (70 per cent cocoa solids), broken into pieces
- 125g butter, softened
- 300g soft, light brown sugar
- 3 large eggs
- 225g self-raising flour, sifted with 1/4tsp salt
- 50g cocoa powder, sifted

For the icing

- 150g plain chocolate (70 per cent cocoa solids), broken into small pieces
- 142ml tub soured cream
- 5tbsp icing sugar, sifted
- 3tbsp crème de cassis
- Grated white chocolate, for decorating

To serve Crème fraîche

1 Heat the oven to 180°C/fan oven 160 °C/mark 4. For the cake, grate the beetroot quite coarsely and melt the chocolate in a bowl set over a saucepan of simmering water.

2 Put the butter, sugar and eggs in a mixer and beat until light and pale. Alternatively, you could use an electric whisk to do this. Add the melted chocolate, then fold in the flour and cocoa powder. Finally, stir in the beetroot.

3 Pour the batter into a greased, 20cm cake tin and bake for 45-50 minutes. The cake is ready when a skewer inserted into the middle comes out clean.

4 Turn out the cake on to a wire rack and leave to cool.

5 For the icing, put the chocolate, soured cream and icing sugar in a bowl and set it over a saucepan of simmering water. Allow to melt, but don't let the ingredients get too hot. Stir everything together, take off the heat and add the crème de

cassis. Stir vigorously so that you are left with a smooth, glossy mixture. Leave to cool and thicken.

6 Spread the icing over the cake with a palette knife, then scatter over grated white chocolate. Leave the icing to set before serving the cake with crème fraîche.

CHOCOLATE, STOUT AND BROWN-SUGAR MOUSSES

This isn't difficult to make, but it's essential that you have all the ingredients, including the cream, at room temperature before you start. Good shortbread makes an excellent accompaniment. Serves 6

- 150g plain chocolate (70 per cent cocoa solids), chopped
- 35g butter
- 8tbsp soft, dark brown sugar
- 3 large eggs, separated
- 6tbsp stout
- 110ml double cream

To serve Cocoa powder or icing sugar, for dusting (optional)

1 Melt the chocolate and butter in a bowl set over a saucepan of simmering water (don't let the bowl touch the water). Beat in 5tbsp of the sugar. Allow to cool slightly.

2 Beat the egg yolks into the chocolate mixture, one at a time, making sure each one is well incorporated before you add the next. Stir the stout into the cream. Then, using a wooden spoon, add the cream to the chocolate mixture, beating it in thoroughly. It may not look like it is coming together at first, but keep beating hard and it will become smooth.

3 In another bowl, whisk the egg whites until they form soft peaks. Add the remaining sugar and whisk until stiff. Whisk a third of the egg whites into the chocolate mixture and combine really well. Using a rubber spatula, fold in the rest. Don't over-mix, but be sure that there are no white streaks. Pour the mousse into 6 cups, bowls or glasses. Cover with cling film and leave to refrigerate for at least 6 hours until set.

4 To serve, sift cocoa powder or icing sugar (if using) over the top of each mousse.



CHESTNUT, RUM AND CHOCOLATE VACHERIN

This layered meringue is easy to make, yet impressive looking. If you can't find marrons glacés, you could sprinkle over a little extra grated chocolate. Serves 6

- 6 large egg whites
- 340g caster sugar
- 2tsp vanilla extract
- 600ml double cream
- 200g plain chocolate (70 per cent cocoa solids), roughly chopped
- 500g tin sweetened chestnut purée
- 2tbsp dark rum
- Marrons glacés to decorate
- Gold leaf to decorate (optional)

1 Heat the oven to 110°C/fan oven 90°C/mark 1/4. Line 3 baking sheets with non-stick baking parchment and draw a 20cm diameter circle on to each. Turn over the sheets so that the pencil circle does not leave a mark on the meringue.

2 In a large bowl, whisk the egg whites to stiff peaks, then whisk in the sugar 1tbsp at a time. Whisk in the vanilla extract. Spoon equal

quantities of the meringue on to each circle and smooth the surfaces so that you have three flat discs, each 20cm in diameter. Bake for 1 1/4-1 1/2 hours. Turn off the heat and leave to cool in the oven.

3 Pour 400ml cream into a saucepan and slowly bring to the boil. Take off the heat and stir in the chopped chocolate until the chocolate has melted and the mixture is smooth. Leave to cool, then refrigerate for 1-1 1/2 hours, or until the cream is thick enough to spread.

4 Mix the chestnut purée with the rum. Whip the remaining cream until it is just forming soft peaks, then fold into the chestnut mixture and chill.

5 To serve, place a meringue disc, flat side up, on to a serving plate. Carefully spread over a third of the chocolate cream, then half of the chestnut mixture. Place the second meringue disc on top, flat side up, pressing down lightly, and repeat the chocolate and chestnut layers. Place the final meringue disc on top and spread over the remaining chocolate cream. Decorate with marron glacé halves and gold leaf, if using. Chill until ready to serve.



CHOCOLATE, ORANGE AND VANILLA MACAROONS

There can be nothing more tempting than the window of a Ladurée shop selling a rainbow of French macaroons. Use a piping bag with a large, plain nozzle and start a few hours ahead to let the uncooked macaroons rest for a couple of hours to form a crust. Any leftover macaroons can be frozen, unfilled.

Makes about 24 macaroons

- **400g icing sugar, sifted**
- **250g ground almonds, sifted**
- **6 egg whites, at room temperature**
- **50g granulated sugar**
- **1 1/4tbsp cocoa powder, sifted**
- **Grated zest of 1 1/2 small oranges**
- **1 scant tsp vanilla extract**
- **165g mascarpone, lightly beaten**

1 Line 3 large baking sheets with non-stick baking parchment. Mix the icing sugar with the almonds. 2 Place the egg whites in the bowl of a food mixer and, with the balloon attachment, whisk to soft peaks.

Alternatively, use an electric whisk. Add the granulated sugar and continue to whisk until the egg whites are stiff and glossy. Carefully fold in the icing sugar and almond mixture. 3 Divide the mixture evenly into 3 bowls. Fold the cocoa powder into the first, the grated orange zest into the second and the vanilla extract into the third.

4 Fit a piping bag with a large plain nozzle and fill with the chocolate mixture. Pipe out rounds of 3.5-4cm in diameter, leaving at least 3-4cm between each. Clean out the bag or use a new one (you can buy disposable bags) and repeat with the other two flavours. Leave the baking sheets in a cool, dry place for at least 2 hours.

5 Heat the oven to 150°C/fan oven 130°C/mark 2. Bake the macaroons in the oven for 15-20 minutes until they are firm to the touch and slightly risen. Remove from the oven and leave to cool on the trays. When cold, carefully lift the macaroons off the paper with a spatula. 6 Just before serving, sandwich the macaroons together with about a teaspoon of mascarpone.



Drinking wine with chocolate may be the ultimate indulgence, but only when the wine is right. The rule of thumb is that the wine must be at least as sweet as the dessert; if it's not, it will taste tart. And often desserts are not only rich and sweet but densely coating in texture, so the wine needs corresponding power or concentration as well as sweetness. Fortified wines, such as port, red Vins Doux Naturels (e.g. Maury and Banyuls) and Australian Liqueur Muscats, hit the spot, as does Tokaji Aszú. Other sweet Muscats are also good bets and, depending on the dessert's other flavours, wines such as Sauternes or sweet Sémillon.

CAKE

Beetroot, berries and chocolate all point towards sweet red wines. Black Muscat is a rarity that works well, as do the sweet Grenache-based reds from Roussillon, France's less tannic answer to port: **Mas Amiel Maury 2011**, £13.50 for 37.5cl, £20.95 for 75cl, Lea & Sandeman, 020-7244 0522.

VACHERIN

Although very sweet and creamy, the flavour of this isn't intensely chocolatey and it has the extra ingredient of chestnut, so I would choose an opulent, young Sauternes, Monbazillac or New-World, botrytis Sémillon: **Harrods Sauternes 2012**, £22.95 for 50cl.

MACAROONS

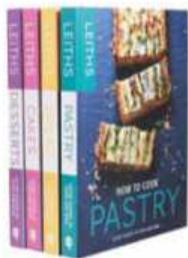
The almond, orange and chocolate all suggest a sweet Muscat. A Vin Doux Naturel such as Muscat de Beaumes de Venise may be a touch heavy, so I would go for a lower alcohol unfortified wine: **Vistamar Late Harvest Moscatel 2013**, from Chile, £6.99 for 37.5cl, Majestic □

MOUSSES

These are sweet enough to take one of Australia's raisiny, brown liqueur Muscats, but Hungary's exceptional Tokaji is also a hit: **Royal Tokaji 5 Puttonyos 2008**, £19.99 for 50cl, Laithwaites (03330-148168). Beer lovers can try chocolate or honey porter.

All I want for Christmas...

...are the ingredients for the perfect kitchen – or a nice glass of wine. ALEXANDER BREEZE and LAURA HOULDSWORTH showcase a feast of presents for foodies



LEITHS COOKBOOKS, *How to Cook Desserts; How to Cook Cakes; How to Cook Bread; How to Cook Pastry* (Quadrille, £15 each), from Leiths. 020-8749 6400; leiths.com



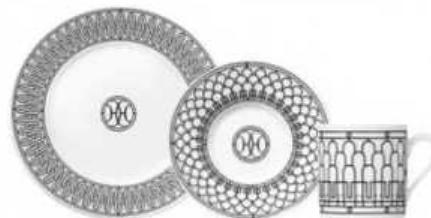
LINEN APRON (slate grey), £49.50; and cookery-class gift voucher, from £185; both from Thyme. 01367-850174; thyme.co.uk



Gift box of Louis Roederer Brut Premier NV CHAMPAGNE and two glasses, £64.95, from The Whisky Exchange and Harrods. whiskyexchange.com | harrods.com



'Brompton Collection' HAMPER, containing a selection of teabags, coffee, biscuits, chocolate and preserves, £70, from Harrods. 020-7730 1234; harrods.com



Porcelain 'H Déco' DESSERT PLATE, 22.5cm, £46, and COFFEE CUP AND SAUCER, 12cm saucer, £82, both from Hermès. hermes.com



Hand-etched lead crystal, silver and rosewood WINE DECANTER, 'Trafalgar', 32 x 13cm diameter, 1-litre capacity, £525, from Linley. 020-7730 7300; davidlinley.com



OAK SERVING BOARDS, 'Large Platter', 55 x 30cm, £68; and 'Small Oval', 32.5 x 22.5cm, £55; and **OAK NAPKIN RINGS**, 'Square', 8.5 x 6cm, £35 for four; all from Hop & Peck. 01799-522737; hopandpeck.co.uk



Aluminium stove-top KETTLE, 3-litre capacity, £93, from Aga Cookshop. 0800-804 6296; agacockshop.co.uk



GLASS JARS, 'Belmont', large, 42 x 27cm diameter, £45; medium, 30 x 22cm diameter, £32; and small, 23 x 12cm diameter, £15; all from Neptune. 01793-427300; neptune.com



Stainless-steel and anodised-steel STAND MIXER, 43.7 x 31.2 x 39.7cm, £1,300, from Electrolux Grand Cuisine. grandcuisine.com



WINES, 'Own Selection Trio' (Crémant de Limoux, Antech-Limoux; Reserve Red, Collovalay & Terrier; and Reserve White, Collovalay & Terrier), £36, from Berry Bros & Rudd. 0800-280 2440; bbr.com



'Carousel' TEA COLLECTION, including earl grey, oolong and sweet jasmine blends, £20, from Newby of London. newbyteas.co.uk



Not with Pinot Grigio.

Because we want you to leave with the right bottle of wine, we may question your choices from time to time. If you ask for a Pinot Grigio to drink with your roast chicken, we may politely suggest a nice unoaked Chardonnay instead.

In the end though, it is only a suggestion and we promise that whichever bottle you leave with, it will have passed our one simple test:

'Is it good to drink?'



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harrods.com/hampers

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